A

# DISQUISITION

UPON

# ETRUSCAN VASES;

DISPLAYING

## THEIR PROBABLE CONNECTION WITH THE SHOWS AT ELEUSIS,

AND THE

## CHINESE FEAST OF LANTERNS,

WITH EXPLANATIONS OF A FEW OF

## THE PRINCIPAL ALLEGORIES DEPICTED UPON THEM.



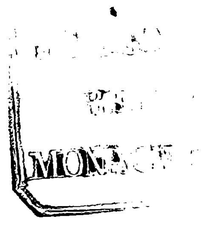

Λαμπρὸν ἄγων φάος ἀγνὸν. *Onomacritus, H. 5, v. 8.*

Οἷόν ἐσι καὶ τὸ τῦ λαμπ῎ηρος (αἴνιγμα); ἔοικε γὰρ ὁ λαμπ῎ηρ τῷ περιέχοντι τὴν ψυχὴν σώματι· φῶς γάρ ἐσιν ἡ ἐντὸς ψυχή. *Plutarch. Rom. Quæst.*

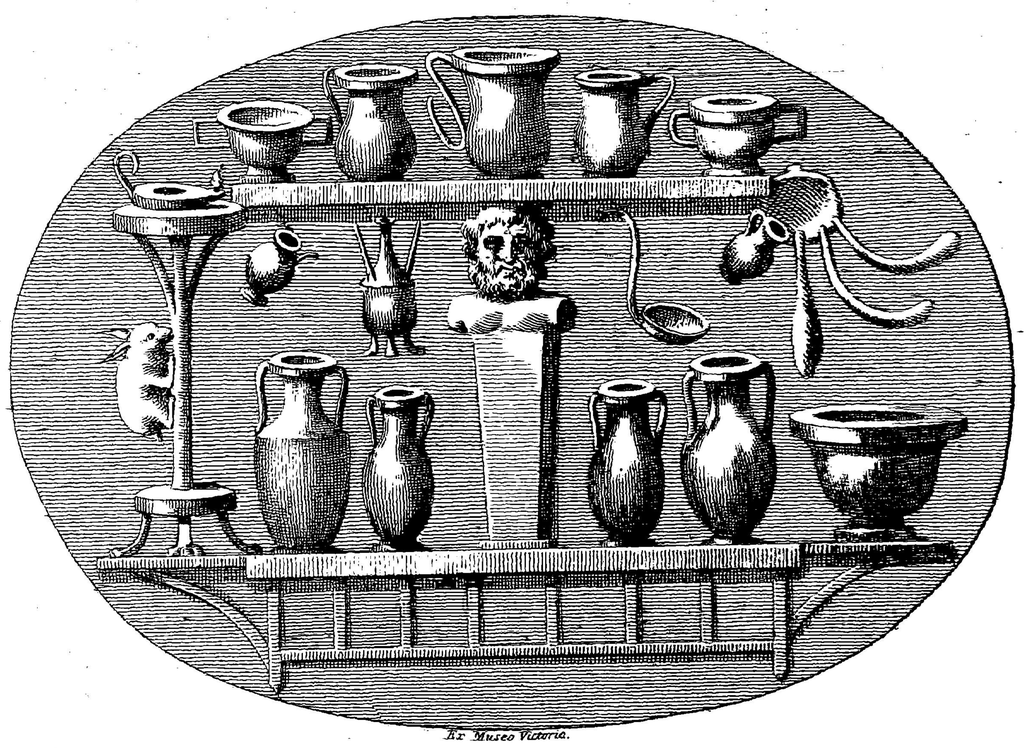

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Revd. J. Watson
from the Author.



Ex Museo Victoria.

# PREFACE.

THE object of this Tract is to render a more clear and satisfactory account than has been hitherto given, of the nature, use and meaning of those painted Vases, usually termed Etruscan. The observations comprised in it chiefly concern the antiquary; but some persons curious in painting, have supposed that if these vessels were properly examined, they would furnish valuable materials for the ancient history of the art, to such, therefore, the writer addresses, by way of Preface, some remarks that result from his investigations.

In this work he has ventured to assert, and he

conceives upon very sufficient grounds, what is perfectly new, viz. that the paintings upon vases were copied from transparent scenes. If this conclusion should be deemed just, it will appear, that D'Hancarville was mistaken, when he reasoned upon the art from the paintings of Greek vases. At least, we may presume, that unless better specimens existed at the same early times, upon wood, or canvas, or in fresco, the art of painting in Greece was very far behind that of sculpture, and we must be compelled to admit, that the Greek painters were from necessity deficient in composition(1) and colouring; at the same time that we acknowledge they excelled in character and design. If we are to believe, that the most skilful artists(2) of Greece were engaged in the service of religion, to copy these scenes from the temple at Eleusis, and some perhaps will be induced to conclude as much, from the spirit and taste with which many paintings are executed upon the vases of Nola, upon which the names of the allegorical personages are expressed in Greek characters of the very latest form;(3) these points admitted, we should still be left to regret, that those, who so employed their pencils, could never rise to a higher title than that of *Σκιαγράφοι*, or shadow-painters. The credit of the Greek painters, however, has been ably vindicated by several

writers, particularly by the ingenious Mr. Webbe. His evidences seem to prove, that (except, at least as to mixed compositions) the Greeks were perfect in every department of the art. The writer of this Tract therefore feels inclined to discourage any further attempts either to ascertain the progress of the art, or the perfection of it at any particular period, by such imperfect documents as the Greek vases afford; and he trusts the reasonableness of his conjectures respecting their use, will justify his dissent from the opinions of D'Hancarville on this head. —He dedicates his work to the entertainment and candour only of a few lovers of Greek antiquities; but he designed it more particularly as an acknowledgment to those friends, whose politeness to him will appear in these pages.

(1) Either the ground, or the figures, in these paintings being transparent, it became necessary that the latter should be detached as much as possible from each other, to prevent confusion: hence the difficulty of grouping, otherwise, than by placing the figures upon different elevations in the picture. A most valuable amphora, now in the possession of Wm. Chinnery, Esq. is a notable instance. This vase is cited by Winckelmann, and is otherwise well known from its subject, usually termed the death of Patroclus. It presents a complicated group of figures designed with great spirit. These are placed not on the same plane, but on three tiers or stages, in defiance of all rules of perspective.

(2) The artists who executed these illumined paintings, certainly upon some occasions were proud of their work. Upon a vase in the collection of Thomas Hope, Esq. is inscribed the name of the painter, ΤΑΛΕΙΑΕΣ ΕΡΟΙΕΣΕΝ. This vase was found at Agrigentum, and is of very early manufacture.

(3) I write this with particular reference to a lettered Campana vase, (the finest I have ever seen), now in the possession of James Edwards, Esq.— The subject of it is the mystical descent of Theseus, accompanied by Castor and Tydeus, to bring back Actæon from the shades.

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☞ The Chinese board, described p. 4, proves to be a table for divination by the *pa qua*, or eight lots—the number of which was determined after the sacred Ogdoad of Fohi. This subject is interesting, and might be illustrated with no great difficulty by the means of paintings, and other Chinese monuments, both of art and science, in this country.

# PRELIMINARY REMARKS

ON

# THE CABIRI.



Size of the original.

# PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

In submitting the result of some enquiries made at different times, respecting the nature, use, and meaning of Etruscan* Vases, I shall present my thoughts, as they occurred, in a progressive course of reading and observation.

Whoever, in the moments of literary relaxation, will occasionally pause, to mark the coincident objects of his amusement, he will find a variety of conjectural novelties arise, which further observation and comparison will confirm, and

* This word is differently written by Horace, accordingly as it suited the rhythm of his verse:

Ver. 4. "Minacis aut Etrusca Porsenæ manus,"

and

Ver. 40. "Hetrusca præter et volate littora."

In the same Epode (16), and in Catullus, we have,

"Aut porcus Umber, aut obesus Hetruscus." Od. 40, v. 11.

It is indifferent which orthography we choose.

establish little short of undoubted truths: a chain of interesting facts will thus be insensibly extended, and to such a degree, that the two extremes of his research will, in the end, appear highly incongruous, unless the intermediate gradations be taken into consideration.

These reflections I offer, in order to obviate any surprise at a disquisition upon Etruscan vases being opened by animadversions upon ancient games. But I find reference to them unavoidable, from the insight they afford me into the character and offices of the Curetes, who gave rise to the mysteries which this Treatise is designed to illustrate. The reader will judge whether the inferences I shall deduce from them be fairly drawn.

In a Chinese book (that by the kindness of a learned friend I have the satisfaction to possess) which treats, among other subjects, the Games of China, I have discovered the board of the *Πετ7εία* precisely in the form I had assigned to it by conjectures upon the text of Julius Pollux.* Towards the beginning of the section wherein are displayed the peculiarities of this game, I have remarked the figure of a hand uplifted, upon the fingers of which are noted the characters, as I presume, of the pieces with which the game is to be played. It has

* This board appears to be constructed by the Chinese compass. The characters denoting the points of the compass immediately surround the sacred, and give a distinguishing name to each of the twelve squares below. If this be a game of skill, it may perhaps be a game of circumnavigation, and it may at least determine for us the nature of the Greek Ναυμαχία, of which Julius Pollux has given but scanty information, he having merely observed, that the sacred had a place upon it, as it also had upon the Πετ7εία. I ground my conjecture upon a riddle, which Athenæus observed was περιφερόμενον, so common in the mouth of every one, that he has neglected to favour us with its meaning.

Casaubon adopting the opinion of some anonymous learned man, has referred

occurred to me, that what Mr. Bailly observed,* upon the information of Mr. Court de Gibelin, respecting the characters of Persepolis† (said to be five in number), and of the art of computation, must be true: that the origin of them must be looked for in the five fingers, the number of which seems to have prompted man instinctively with the knowledge of arithmetic. I had almost said the same of the Greek and Chinese game. But as this appears to have had its origin near Mount Ida, previous to the siege of Troy, may I now be permitted to enquire, who were those Idæi Dactyli, who resided at the foot of that celebrated mountain, and who dancing, in a double set of five and five, were termed Idæi Dactyli, as representing the toes of the foot of Ida? May not these priests have been the original constructors of the Petteia:‡ at least, is it but we will examine whether it may not bear a different explanation.

Πέντ' ἄνδρες δέκα ναυσὶ κατέδραμον εἰς ἕνα χῶρον.
Ἐν δὲ λίθοις ἐμάχοντο, λίθον δ' ἐκ εὖ [ἦν] ἀνελέσθαι.
Δίψῃ δ' ἐξώλλυντο, ὕδωρ δ' ὑπερεῖχε γενείων. Athenæus, lib. x. p. 457.

"Five men, with ten ships (with allusion to the number of men, and stations), pushed forward to one spot (perhaps the sacred). They fought with stones (i. e. pebbles), but it was no easy matter to take off from the board a pebble. They were dying from thirst, yet water was above their chins." With regard to the last line, I had concluded with the anonymous critic cited by Casaubon, that they played in hot weather, and that the sweat of the combatants was thus obscurely described, in order to increase the difficulty of the ænigma; but it has been suggested to me that the board itself might probably be implied by ὕδωρ, and that some better word might be substituted for ὑπερεῖχε,—"their chins being extended over the water, i. e. over the board."

* Lettres sur l'Atlantide, p. 457, 458.

† We now possess better, though not complete, information on this subject. See the Dissertation of Dr. Hager on the Babylonian Bricks, quarto. Nevertheless, the latter part of the remark above cited may be allowed to be just.

‡ Whence, perhaps, the strange anecdote of Palamedes playing at this game on a pavement of large dimensions, with living men instead of pieces.

not probable that they first applied it to the purposes of astronomy?—for that the dances of the Idæi Dactyli were allegorical, and had reference to astronomy, we may be certain;* and if this be admitted, it is probable that the application of the Plinthion to astronomical purposes by the Egyptians, was no original invention of that learned people.

I am well aware of the objection that will be raised against my conjecture from the authorities of numerous writers, who refer the Idæi Dactyli to Ida in Crete, instead of the mountain of the same name in Phrygia; but it will scarcely be denied me, that the Idæi Dactyli were priests of Cybele, who was properly styled the Phrygian Goddess; so that I have every reason to think that a similar order of priests was established in Phrygia and Crete, who celebrated the same orgies to the same goddess, on two mountains known by the same name. This difficulty removed, the reader will expect my reasons for believing that the Idæi Dactyli, who invented the *Πετ]εία*, applied it to the purposes of astronomy.

This I conclude from the nature of the game, wherein a circumvention effected by the pebbles, would, if properly accepted, have illustrated the phænomenon of an eclipse.

* The dances of the Salian priests, who, in the opinion of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, corresponded with the Grecian Curetes, were certainly astronomical. Callimachus says, that upon the birth of Jupiter—" Οὗλα δὲ Κάρητές σε περὶ πρύλιν ὠρχήσαντο" *Hymn. in Jov.* v. 52. " The Curetes danced the *Yule* dance." Or,—" They danced the Fire dance to appease the All-healing deity." This was celebrated, no doubt, at the opening of the new year, upon the conversion of the sun from the lower hemisphere.

The reader will observe, that I consider the Idæi Dactyli and the Curetes to be the same; in this I am justified by Onomacritus, by whom the latter are styled—" Attendants upon the Mother of the Gods, in her frantic orgies on the mountains:"—

Μητρὸς ὀρειομανῆς συνοπάονες. *Hymn.* xxx. v. 5.

Ἡ τέχνη τῆς παιδιᾶς ἔστι, says Julius Pollux (lib. ix. sec. 98) of the *Πλινθίον*, (but which words equally apply to the *Πετ7εία*) περιλήψει τῶν δύο ψήφων ὁμοχρόων τὴν ἑτερόχρουν ἀναιρεῖν. "The art of the game is, to take by a circumvention of two of the same colour any pebble of a different one."

The astronomical meaning of the word Ἀναιρεῖν may be collected from the Letters of Mr. Rabaut de St. Etienne,* who ingeniously observes, that in the fabulous annals of Greece, when a star set, it was figuratively said to be *slain*.—The same expression may be supposed to have been adopted when a planet was eclipsed; accordingly we find in Plutarch,—Οὐ μὴν ΑΝΑΙΡΕΙΤΑΙ παντάπασί τὸν Ἥλιον (ἡ Σελήνη)—*de Iside et Osir. sec.* 44, *p.* 111. *Ed. Squire.* "The moon having the sun within her power, and on the point of *destroying* him, yet suffers him to escape, in the same manner as Isis released Typho."

A notable instance of a circumvention, or eclipse, occurs in the early Grecian history. The Apaturia, which were annually held for the purpose of enrolling the young Athenians of both sexes in the Φρατρίαι, or fraternities, were styled Ἀπατούρια, or Ἀπατόρια, quasi Ὁμοπατόρια, because their country then first acknowledged them as Athenian citizens. But Proclus derives the word from Ἀπάτη, "deception," and he tells us of a duel which was fought between certain personages, who, I am led to conclude, from the preceding observations, were purely astronomical. We find that Melanthus was opposed to Xanthus in single combat, in the midst of which the latter looked back, and saw an imaginary figure, Celænus, in a black

* Lettres à Mr. Bailly sur l'Histoire primitive de la Gréce. Octavo.

goat's skin attacking him from behind. He complained of the unfairness of the contest, and was slain in the moment of turning round to view the supposed ally of his enemy. If we place these combatants in the order in which they were opposed to each other, we shall find that Xanthus, yellow, was placed between Melanthus, black, and *Κελαινὸς*, a word of similar signification. Now Xanthus is the sun, that same Apollo who gave the name to his favourite river,

" Phœbe, qui *Xantho* lavis amne crines,"

and the whole will imply an eclipse, where one luminous body *Ἀνηρέθη*, was obscured by the co-operation of two planets. Some such combat appears to be described on a vase in Tischbein's Collection, (Vol. I. last plate), where the *escape*, or rather the renovation, of Xanthus is expressed in a symbolical manner, which will be explained hereafter.

The phænomena of eclipses, I believe, were understood, though very imperfectly, by the Curetes, who expressed them by a mystical combat, wherein one of the three was *killed* by the other two.* Thus Onomacritus, in his Hymn to Cyrbas, one of the three Corybantes, describes him, as

*Φοίνιον, αἱμαχθέντα κασιγνήτων ὑπὸ δισσῶν. Hymn.* 38, v. 6.

i.e. " Covered with blood, falling by the hands of two relative planets :"—where we see an evident allusion to the bloody appearance of the moon in eclipse. And this, I conceive, will not appear a forced explanation of the passage, since, in

* It is scarcely necessary to remark the error of Julius Firmicus, in charging the Corybantes with parricide, but it may be seen in Gutberleth, *p.* 95 *de Myster. Deor. Cabiror.*

the 30th Hymn, v. 2, the Curetes are termed *Εὐαστῆρες*, "faithful representatives of the stars."—Their elucidating the phænomena of eclipses seems to be beautifully expressed by the words "*Κρουσολύραι, παράρυθμοι.*"—"Who play in discords on your sounding lyres." *Ibid*, v. 3. For these occasional discords in the harmony of the spheres, can only imply the *defectus lunæ, solisque*.—This subject is frequently exhibited on vases. I have prefixed a vignette to these remarks, taken from a small Sicilian vase in the possession of H. Tresham, Esq. R.A. which represents the mystical combat of the Curetes.—Another example may be seen among Tischbein's engravings from Sir W. Hamilton's Collection, Vol. I. Plate XXIII. which is rendered further curious by an inscription in Pelasgic characters.

It is only from a train of such analogous conclusions as these, that I can affirm, the Greeks in the earliest ages were instructed in the principles of astronomy, by means of their games of pebbles. The Chinese were certainly so instructed, as will be evident to those, who have considered the early literature of that people. It is true, that the mysterious uses of the *Ko-ua* and the *Ho-tou*, by the black and white beads of which Fohi is said to have expressed the motions of the heavenly bodies, and the rules of arithmetic, are no longer understood in China. Volumes have been written, and printed, in that country, to explain the uses of these diagrams, and the combinations of their parti-coloured beads, but to no effectual purpose: nevertheless I venture to believe, some general idea may be formed of the nature of these lost sciences of the Chinese, from what I have suggested of the *πεττευτηρίον*.

The conjectural remarks already submitted, may tend to throw some light upon what has hitherto been considered a

question of much difficulty; namely, who were those persons called Curetes and Cabiri. They were termed *Magni Dii*, and *Δαίμονες*, it is true; but since many have derived them from Phœnicia,* we have only to look at the genealogical table of the gods of that country,† to be satisfied that the Cabiri were not deities, unless indeed we can believe that the huntsman, the fisherman, the mechanic, and the husbandman, were also such. The truth is, were the table referred to adopted for authority, the Phœnicians deified events, and the invention of the useful arts; and as the Cabiri were the last of this line, they could be no more than priests who represented deities, or the depositaries of the science of those days, and of the useful arts which are enumerated in regular succession before them. The Curetes were the same with the Cabiri: the number of them was originally but three, but it was increased according as their mode of illustrating the sciences they taught, required. As the three Curetes, they represented the sun, moon, and earth; when their number was increased to five, they were charged with correcting the computation of time, and in this capacity were those five Idæi Dactyli, Hercules, Pæoneus, Epimedes, Iasius, and Ida, who instituted

* They were not, however, originally from Phœnicia, but were Pelasgi, and came north-about into Greece, and first settled in Samothrace. In the same way the Romans learnt their Salian rites from the Umbri, a Pelasgic people in the north of Italy. Acceperunt (scil. Samothraces) mysteria hæc a Pelasgis, si fides habenda sit Herodoto, lib. ii. cap. 51, scribenti Τὴν Σαμοθρηΐκην οἴκεον πρότερον Πέλασγοι, παρὰ τέτων Σαμοθρηΐκες τὰ (Καβείρων) ὄργια παραλαμβάνεσι; i. e. Samothraciam quondam incoluerunt Pelasgi, a quibus Cabirorum orgia Samothraces acceperunt. hoc testatur quoque præstantissimus Stillingfleetius in originibus sacris, p. 472, ubi contra Bochartum probat Samothraces orgia Cabirica a Pelasgis accepisse, non verò a Phœnicibus. Gutberleth de Myst. Deor. Cabirorum, p. 58, 59.

† It is given by Gutberleth, p. 29, from Eusebius de Præp. Evang. lib. i. cap. 10.

the Olympiads, each Dactylus presiding over a separate year. Eight in number, they might have taught the œconomy of the Solar System, and in their double complement of five and five, on Mount Ida, whether in Phrygia or Crete, they invented games, and probably devised that useful branch of science, decimal arithmetick. The researches of an ingenious mythologist have further led me to believe they had a general acquaintance with natural philosophy. Dr. Blackwall has observed, p. 276,* that the primary gods of the ancients were not understood to be deified mortals, but parts of the mighty self-moving frame created by the First Cause: and again, speaking of the mysteries, p. 278, upon the authority of Cicero, "when they are explained, and their real import examined, the NATURE of THINGS (the *universe*) is rather laid open than the nature of the gods: the powers and parts of the universe were therefore the ancient Cabir, or mighty gods, and their mutual connections, operations, and productions were typically represented in their mysteries." *Ibid.* If this opinion of Dr. Blackwall be qualified, by supposing the Cabiri to have been priests who personated the powers he speaks of, it will approach, I think, as near to the truth as can be expected in so remote a question.

The names assumed by the Cabiri, when conducting their mysteries in Samothrace, have been made known to us by the Scholiast upon Apollonius Rhodius. They were: Axieros Axiocersa, Axiocersos, and Camillus. The first of these was compared by the Hellenistic Greeks to the Ceres of their mythology, the second to Proserpine, the third to Hades, and the fourth to Hermes, the agent or minister of the other three.

* Letters concerning Mythology, octavo, 1748.

The derivations of these names by Bochart are well known. The following proposed by Dr. Blackwall has pleased me much better, and I refer the reader to p. 281 of his Letters for the rest.—Axieros from the Chaldee אזה *aazi*, succendit, accendit, calefecit, denoting, according to Dr. Blackwall, fermentation, and ארץ *erets*, Terra. Dr. Blackwall therefore concludes that the Cabir gods were the powers and produce of fire, impregnating mother earth in the mysterious work of vegetation, p. 280. Such appears to have been the principle enforced by certain Idæi Dactyli, whose names are recorded by the Scholiast of Apollonius Rhodius.* The first of them, Acmon, or heavenly fire, the second Damnameneus, or water, which allayeth the power of fire, or earth, the residuum of water, and Celmis, the agent or minister of the other two ; as I hope to shew upon the authority of an ancient monument hereafter. The principle of decay and reproduction by fermentation, upon which the œconomy of vegetation depends, appears to have been included in their doctrines, as may be inferred from the title bestowed upon the Curetes by Onomacritus, Τροφέες καὶ αὖτ' ὀλετῆρες.—"by turns who cherish and destroy." *Hymn.* 37, v. 14. And if they were the depositaries of the useful learning of their time, we need not be surprised to find them explaining agriculture, the most necessary of all the sciences, upon philosophical principles.

If Stillingfleet and Gutberleth have satisfactorily shewn, that, with respect to Greece, the Cabiri were solely of Pelasgic origin, we must be under the necessity of rejecting the Phœnician table of deities, from which it may be doubted whether

* Κέλμις, Δαμναμενεύς τε μέγας καὶ ὑπέρβιος Ἄκμων.
See schol. upon *v.* 1129. *lib.* i. *Argonaut.*

we shall be able to trace their descent, or identify their persons. For I cannot refrain from believing that the Cabiri, at first, were actual persons, who were revived and represented in a succession of priests, their descendants. Hesychius tells us they were sons of Sochus (*Σωχὸς*), and although some doubt may be entertained, whether this word be an epithet of Hermes,* yet I scarcely hesitate to consider it another name for Dionysus, particularly as Father Giorgi has noticed upon the authority of Clemens, that Dionysus was also called *Ἄμπελος*, "*the vine.*†" *Σωχὶς*, says Hesychius, is a species of vine;‡ and *Σωχὸς*, he informs us, was the Father of the Curetes;§ now Dionysus (the Deo-Naush of the Hindus) is no other than Noah.—It follows, that the three Curetes, or Cabiri,‖ were Japhet, Shem, and Ham, who, it may be readily believed, after the disappearance of the Patriarch (who probably betook himself to China), were the depositaries of the learning and science of the Antediluvians. Whatever mysteries were devised by their descendants, must have been designed to keep alive such knowledge by oral discourse, if not by scenic exhibition: and this at a time when *writing*, if it were known, yet cannot be supposed to have been very generally practised.

In reviewing the authorities of writers who speak of the Cabiri, and the names of places called after them, it appears they journeyed into Samothrace by the way of Pontus, and the northern coast of Asia Minor; and a learned antiquary, with some appearance of probability, has discovered traces of them

* Σῶκος, ἐπίθετον τῦ Ἑρμῦ. Lex. MS. See note on the word Σῶκος. Hesych.

† Alphabet. Tibetan. p. 135.

‡ Σωχίς· εἶδος ἀμπέλε. Hesych.

§ Σωχός· ὁ τῶν Κερήτων πατήρ. Hesych.

‖ The founder of every primitive people was assimilated to Noah. Hence the seven sons of Misr were termed Cabiri by the Egyptians.

amongst the Orthocorybantians in Bactria, which he has chosen for the seat of the arts, in the most primitive times after the flood. The memory of that recent catastrophe, by which the human race, with the exception of one family, had been destroyed, was preserved no doubt, with the learning they conveyed. The melancholy impression of this event, and the fear of its recurrence, are eloquently set forth by the ingenious Mr. Boulanger ; and numerous instances may be collected from Greek and Roman writers, of the consequent gloom that overhung the first settlers in their respective countries. This gloom appears to have been first dissipated in Greece, about the time of Orpheus, who by instituting the Eleusinian mysteries, or rather, by giving a new turn to those of Samothrace, introduced consolatory doctrines, with a brighter prospect to the initiated, and "a better hope after death."—From this time forward, observations upon astronomical phænomena, and computations of time, became essential component parts of the theology of the ancients ; and I refer my reader to the very curious work of Mr. Boulanger, for the ideas of destruction and renovation attached by the ancients to the appearance of eclipses, for their religious speculations upon the demise and renewal of cycles and periods, and for the causes from which he has deduced them. Mr. Boulanger has taken an extensive view of the religion of the ancients, as connected with astronomy, which might also have been extended to other parts of natural philosophy, for the ancients collected examples of their favourite scheme from every department of science, and from every quarter of the physical world. To enter into any detail respecting the physical theology of Eleusis in this place, would lead me too far from the immediate

object of this discourse; besides, it may be more satisfactorily collected from an exposition of certain ancient monuments hereafter. Suffice it to say, that RENOVATION FROM WATER was the prevalent doctrine—the primary event of creation was explained by it,* and it formed the basis of the consolatory hope alluded to.

In what manner the Cabiri conducted their mysteries in Samothrace it would be difficult to determine, but it is probable that mimic representations might there have occasionally taken place, since Olympias, when present amongst them, is said to have seen her husband Philip then in Potidæa, by which we must understand that she saw him in some scenic exhibition.

These mysteries were enlarged, and refined upon by the

* Even in the Phœnician table, as I understand it, the two events of creation and the deluge are jointly recorded. I scarcely need premise that many terms in this table must be considered as purely figurative. As such I understand the term "*wife*," denoting—"affinity, alliance, similarity."—I would thus interpret it:

As Κολπία, קול—פי—יה the Spirit of God, moved on the waters in Chaos, *uxor ipsius*, *in the same way* floated Βάαυτ,† the ark, in the deluge. As from this Spirit proceeded αἰῶν, life, and γένος, the animal creation, *uxor ipsius*, so from Βάαυτ proceeded Πρωτόγονος,‡ Noah, and γενεὰ, the renewal of the human race. The parallel here ends. Two events are jointly recorded, the second instanced as a type of the first.

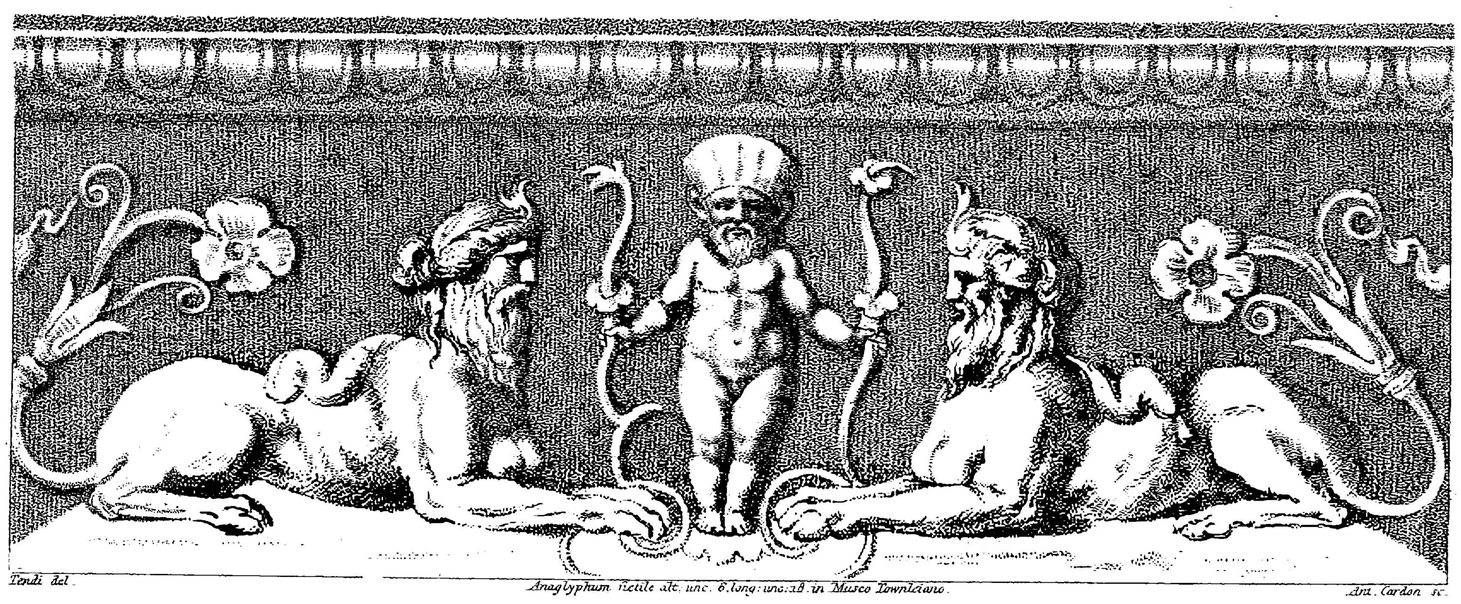
After γένος comes the falling away of the human race, which became worshippers of φῶς, πῦρ, and φλόξ, light, fire, and flame, upon the high places Casius, Libanus, Antilibanus, and Brathú. The useful arts are next enumerated, and Syduc, and the Cabiri, his children, complete the table.

By way of shewing how the Greeks combined the two great events, see the vignette which follows these preliminary remarks, representing a figure on the Lotus with the head of an old man, and the body and limbs of an infant, allusive of a previous state, and enforcing the idea of regeneration. The renovation of the animal and vegetable kingdoms is expressed by the Chimæras, on each side. Compare this with other terra cottas in the Townley Collection, which only imply creation from water.

† The Bahitra of the Hindûs.

‡ Διόνυσον Πρωτογόνον. *Orph.*

priests at Eleusis, who taught the immortality of the soul, though imperfectly, by analogous reasoning from observations upon the vicissitudes of nature. Instructed as to fairer expectations of a future state, the priests spared neither ingenuity nor expense to establish shews, which by their splendour and secrecy should charm as well as invite the curiosity of their countrymen. As the internal œconomy of these mysteries has never yet been properly investigated, and as they gave rise to that elegant class of ancient vessels, which I ultimately design for the subject of this disquisition, I will proceed, as far as my observation has enabled me, to develope the nature of them; but I trust the foregoing conjectures, though loosely proposed, will not be thought impertinent to my general plan: they concern those Cabiri who laid the foundation for the mysteries of Eleusis, and from a coincidence that will be noticed, we shall perhaps have reason to conclude, that their successors imparted to Greece and China both their mysteries and games.



Tendi del. Anaglyphum Fictile alt. unc. 6. long: unc. 18. in Musco Townleiano. Ant. Cardon sc.

# NATURE

OF THE

# ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES, &c.

## *Nature of the Eleusinian Mysteries.—Use and Meaning of Etruscan Vases.*

When we consider how much has been effected by the learned Meursius, in his extensive compilation of passages from ancient writers, referring to the mysteries of Eleusis, as also what has been attempted since his time, it may be deemed a matter of surprise, that so little has hitherto been ascertained respecting this obscure and difficult subject. In Warburton all is darkness—ὁμιχλη και νέφος ἀθρόον. The work of Mr. Le Clerc de Septchenes furnishes but little information. The Baron de Ste. Croix, indeed, has presented us with useful researches, and they are recommended by numerous authorities, which are scrupulously cited for whatever is advanced, whence it happens, that the reader must prize the work, knowing the firmness of the ground he treads. In that part of it wherein the Eleusinian mysteries are treated, a few valuable hints are thrown out, and had the Baron de Ste. Croix pursued them, the writer of this Tract had been spared his labour.—A step further, and all had been disclosed.—But the subject is so obscure, and comprises within itself so much variety, that even though a hope may be indulged of something new to be adduced in these pages, yet it would be presumptuous to suppose that these disquisitions will be deemed conclusive, or that some future enquirer will not throw a clearer light upon the subject, justifying the ancient adage: "*Eleusis servat, quod ostendat revisentibus.*"

The use of Etruscan vases, and the meaning of the paintings with which they are ornamented, are questions involved in no less difficulty.* The learned Passeri boasted to have recovered in them the annals of a lost nation, but the religious, civil, and domestic ceremonies and customs of his favourite Tuscans are not, I think, displayed with much felicity of conjecture. The historical explanations of D'Hancarville are proposed by him with too much mistrust to be warmly adopted; I am compelled to add, that the illustrations of the accomplished Italinski† are by no means satisfactory, and that other learned Antiquaries on the Continent have examined these ancient monuments in a mistaken point of view, I fear there is room to suspect: if these have erred, it is, I conceive, because they have taken up the enquiry abstracted from other investigations, but I trust I shall not be thought to assume too much, if I look for success by pursuing a different course.

D'Hancarville, who carries back the antiquity of certain painted vases‡ to an earlier date than even the foundation of Rome, has remarked the invention of the potter's-wheel by the Athenians, to whom he also refers the elegant forms of

* From the representations of chariot races upon vases, some persons have entertained a mistaken notion, that they were given as meeds to victors in such contests, whereas the flying chariot is purely a mystical emblem. Passeri has even thought they were the drinking vessels of the deceased,§ and by an indiscrete admiration of whatever is Etruscan, models of these sepulchral vessels, with their gloomy ornaments, copied in black and red, are sometimes applied in this country to the same purpose. It is time that these false opinions, as to the use of them, should be exploded.

† Published with the last collection of Vases of Sir Wm. Hamilton, which now decorate the gallery of Thomas Hope, Esq.

‡ Vol. II. p. 109.

§ Vol. III. p. 3, explanations of the plates.

those vessels, which we term Etruscan. This remark induces me to suggest, that the manufacture of these urns might have been originally* carried on in that street in Athens, called *Κεραμεικὸς*, or the Potters-way, and from this circumstance so named. It was there, perhaps, that the Wedgewood of antiquity resided, and it certainly was from the Temple of Ceres, at Eleusis, that he drew the various designs which still embellish his works. Upon the mysteries of this temple the Baron de Ste. Croix has thrown some light: aided by Meursius, he has pointed out the time of their celebration; he has enumerated the priests, and assigned to each their proper office and attire. He has prepared the great temple, or theatre, with its artificial thunder, lightning, and necessary decorations. The Mystæ, introduced in the dark, have taken their seats, and wait with trembling expectation for the opening of the mysteries. Of these he has even given a glimpse, by noticing, though briefly, the spectacle which succeeded.

" L'aspirant y entendoit différentes voix, selon Dion Chrysostôme; la lumiere et les ténebres affectoient alternativement ses sens; à peine pouvoit-il considérer la multiplicité des objets. Les principaux étoient des fantômes, ayant la figure de chien, et diverses formes monstrueuses, que le bruit de la foudre et des éclairs rendoient encore plus terribles. De-là naissoient ces frémissements, ces terreurs, ces saisissements, ces sueurs, qui font comparer, par Plutarque, l'état d'un initié à celui d'un mourant." p. 214.

And further, " On faisoit alors paroître la statue de la Déesse,

* I say *originally*, because, from the number of vessels found in Sicily and at Nola, it is probable that hereafter, we shall hear of Agrigentine mysteries, and Nolan mysteries, equal in point of splendour to those at Eleusis.

frottée avec soin, ornée avec gout, et revêtue de ses plus beaux habits. Elle paroissoit resplendissante d'une clarté divine,* par des reflets de lumiere qu'on savoit artistement ménager." p. 215.

" Le sanctuaire d'Eleusis étoit l'endroit que la Divinité toute entiere remplissoit dans ce moment; les ténebres se dissipoient aussi-tôt; l'ame sortoit de l'abyme; et on passoit de la plus grande obscurité, dans une clarté douce, et sous un ciel serein. Des prairies, ou l'on entendoit des chœurs et des discours sacrés, et ou l'on étoit frappé par la vue de *fantômes saints*, recevoient les initiés.—Ils étoient déclarés Epoptes après ce spectacle." *Ibid.* The foregoing extracts may suffice for a specimen of what has been adduced from ancient authorities in illustration of the mysteries. It is hence that I propose to take up the subject.

These shadows flitting across the stage, the monsters half man half beast, the brilliant appearance of the Goddess illumined by reflected lights,† the holy phantoms which succeeded, induce me to think that the spectacle could not have differed much from the well-known *ombres Chinoises*,‡ or dare I name a truly noble exhibition, I would add the Eidouranion

* The words of Themistius, from which this description appears to have been borrowed, are yet more forcible:——ὁπότε δὲ ὁ τροφήτης ἐκεῖνος, ἀναπετάσας τὰ τροπύλαια τῆ νεῳ, καὶ τὰς χιτῶνας περιςείλας τοῦ ἀγάλματος, καλλύνας τε αὐτὸ, καὶ ἀποσμήξας τανταχόθεν, ἐπεδείκνυ τῷ μυεμένῳ μαρμαρύσσον τε ἤδη, καὶ αὐγῇ καταλαμπόμενον θεσπεσίᾳ, ἥτε ὁμίχλη ἐκείνη, καὶ τὸ νέφος ἀθρόον ὑπερρήγνυτο, καὶ ἐξεφαίνετο ὁ νὰς ἐκ τοῦ βάθες, φέγγες ἀνάπλεως καὶ ἀγλαΐας, ἀντὶ τοῦ τρότερον σκότε. Themistii Orat. 2, in Patrem.

† Thrown perhaps from mirrors " *qu'on savoit artistement ménager.*"

‡ The following account of the manner in which these exhibitions are conducted, is collected from Beckmann's History of Inventions, Vol. III. p. 335. This ingenious amusement consists in moving, by pegs fastened to them, small figures cut of pasteboard, the joints of which are all pliable, behind a piece of fine painted gauze placed before an opening in a curtain, in such a manner as to exhibit various scenes,

of our scientific countryman Mr. Walker, since it is highly probable, that it consisted of various subjects displayed in transparency. This appears confirmed by what Clemens of Alexandria has asserted of them, when he termed the mysteries —" worthy of nightly celebration, by exhibitions of firelight, and admirably suited for the spirited, but vain and foolish minded posterity of Erectheus." *Ἄξια μὲν οὖν ΝΥΚΤΟΣ, τὰ τελέσματα, καὶ ΠΥΡΟΣ, καὶ τοῦ μεγαλήτορος, μᾶλλον δὲ ματαιόφρονος Ἐρεχθειδῶν δήμου.*"* Although by NIGHT and FIRE, this Father likewise meant to express the shamefulness of these shews, and the execration in which he held them.

I find even Passeri is partly inclined to this opinion, for, struck with the orphic appellation of Bacchus, *ϑνητοῖσι φανείς*,— " appearing in splendour to mortals," he has remarked, " quod præcipuè Bacchus ipse totus igneus, et fulgidus adpareret, qui nudis oculis tolerari non posset." Vol. III. p. 19. And he has elsewhere suggested of the Bacchanalia—" fortasse impostores illi ope machinarum, artificiosis splendoribus adhibitis, cum popellus vino æstuaret, imaginem aliquam credulis objiciebant.†" And it is far from improbable that some such delirium as mentioned by Passeri, was produced by a draught of the *κυκεὼν*, or a cup of mixed liquors, in which poppies were a chief ingredient. This was presented to each mysta before the shews began, and might have contributed more to that confusion of the intellects, than the awful appearance of the objects exhibited.

according to pleasure; while the opening covered with gauze is illuminated, towards the apartment where the spectators sit, by means of light reflected back by a mirror; so that the shadows of the pegs are concealed.

* Protrept. p. 18.

† Passeri de Pict. Hetruscor. in Vasc. Vol. III. p. XXXII.

We may hence, I think, collect the real nature of these shews: they probably consisted of transparencies, of which the subjects are faithfully preserved upon Etruscan vases to the present day. The tradition given by Pliny, respecting the origin of the latter, I am inclined to treat as fabulous, and to conclude, that the shadow was transferred to the vase, not from the lamp of the daughter of Dibutades, but from the scenes of the theatre at Eleusis. These, it might be readily supposed, consisted, either of a dark superficies, in which transparent figures were placed, hence—the Etruscan vases with red figures upon a black ground; or, of opake figures, moved behind a transparent canvas; and hence—those earlier vases with black figures upon a red ground.*

There is a country, widely distant from Greece, the natives of which, however, retain some correspondent marks of antiquity, where the vase in a transparent state is occasionally exhibited with great solemnity. Such is the exhibition of lanterns among the Chinese, in their festival so named. The purpose of that ceremony, and of the shews at Eleusis, is the same. At the time of the Chinese festival the manes are supposed to revisit the earth; the lanterns then displayed are not only ornamented with paintings, but are also made further

* A narrow light border frequently encompasses the outline of the figures; but this interval only occurs between some part of the body (as the hair, &c.) expressed in shadow, and the ground of the vase, thus serving as a luminous interval to mark the contour. I cannot forbear noticing the eighty-second plate in the first volume of D'Hancarville's collection, wherein a female touches a priest, or Pan, with a luminous branch, whilst she holds another behind her; the priest likewise bearing one of the same, and a calathus. The appearance of these several branches is can-
..... descent like a firework, or the electric spark, and it might have been produced by perforating the transparent scene, and applying the flame of lamps immediately behind the canvas so punctured.

interesting by certain small figures cut out, and ingeniously moved upon the side.

The object of the Eleusinian mysteries was to inculcate a belief in a future state; and the Chinese feast of lanterns, no doubt, was equally designed to enforce the immortality of the soul, by the ingenious and pleasing medium of moving transparencies.

We may readily conceive that Aristophanes was serious, when he hinted, that it behoved every good Greek to be initiated before death. Now these vessels are only found in the most ancient Greek tombs, and they seem to have been deposited there, as a tessera or mark, that the deceased had been initiated, by commemorating the particular scenes of which he might have been *Ἐπόπτης*, or spectator. These painted vases then, and the *crepundia* of diminutive pottery, we may conclude, were the memorials of initiation spoken of by Apuleius, which he received from the priests, and preserved with devout secrecy in the *penetralia* of his dwelling. Vin' dicam, cujusmodi illas res in sudario obvolutas, laribus Pontiani commendarim? Mos tibi geretur. Sacrorum pleraque Initia in Græcia participavi. Eorum quædam signa et monumenta tradita mihi a sacerdotibus sedulo conservo. Nihil insolitum, nihil incognitum dico: vel unius Liberi Patris Symmistæ, qui adestis, scitis, quid domi conditum celetis, et absque omnibus profanis tacite veneremini.—And again,—Etiamne cuiquam mirum videri potest, cui sit ulla memoria religionis, hominem tot mysteriis Deûm conscium, quædam sacrorum crepundia domi adservare?—*Apologia.*

The certificate of initiation was probably expressed on these memorials in the words *ΚΑΛΩC*, or *ΚΑΛΟC*, inscribed in

transparent characters upon the vases of Nola. Thus *ΚΛΙΝΙΑϹ ΚΑΛΩϹ* sc. *ἐτελεύτησε*, "Clinias died in the good hope,"—upon one of this description in the possession of Samuel Rogers, Esq. *ΚΛΙΤΑΡΧΟϹ ΚΑΛΟϹ* in opaque letters upon the Agrigentine vase of Thomas Hope, Esq. *ΚΑΛΕ ΔΟΚΕϹ*, declared of a female,* upon a vase cited by the Abbé Zarillo, in his Two Letters to Mr. Millin, wherein the Abbé proves, with considerable neatness of remark, as well as erudition, that *δοκεῖς* does not so much imply—"you appear,"—as, "you appear in the judgment of," "you are considered,"—which gives fresh colour to my explanation of the words inscribed: that the person had been approved by the initiator, and by him pronounced perfect.†

The mystic doctrine of the immortality of the soul being allegorically expressed by an elegant groupe on the side of the vase, the painting itself was put for the religious opinion of the person, and the person was consequently represented by the vase. This idea may be illustrated from Plutarch. A passage in the tract *de Iside et Osiride*, which, to my knowledge, has never yet been applied to the present subject, furnishes a very probable account of the manner at least, in which these scenic shews originated, and for the custom of depositing vases in tombs; I may therefore properly conclude this chapter by adducing it.

* As if for ΚΑΛΗ ΔΟΚΕΙϹ.

† From these considerations I feel inclined to disbelieve that anecdote which Clemens has reported, (Protrept. p. 47, ed. Potter,) so injurious to the credit of Phidias, that the artist designed to celebrate the beauty of a favourite by the words inscribed on the finger of his Olympian Jupiter. I rather apprehend, that proud of his performance, Phidias gave the challenge to criticism, by declaring, in the language of Eleusis, ΠΑΝΤΑΡΧΗΣ ΚΑΛΟΣ, that his figure of the all-sufficient Deity was a *perfect work*.

It seems, that the veils, or sacred garments, with which the statues of the Ægyptian deity Isis were apparelled, were partly *black*, and partly *white*, for which Plutarch gives the following reason: *Καὶ περιστέλλοντες, τὰ μὲν, μέλανα καὶ σκίωδη, τὰ δὲ, φανερὰ καὶ λαμπρὰ* τῆς περὶ θεῶν ὑποδηλοῦντα οἰήσεως, οἷα καὶ περὶ τὴν ἐσθῆτα τὴν ἱερὰν ἀποφαίνεται. διὸ καὶ τὸ κοσμεῖσθαι τούτοις τοὺς ἀποθανόντας Ἰσιακοὺς, σύμβολόν ἐστι τοῦτον τὸν λόγον εἶναι μετ' αὐτῶν, καὶ τοῦτον ἔχοντας, ἄλλο δὲ μηδὲν, ἐκεῖ βαδίζειν.*—Sect. iii.—"Moreover, covering the statues with apparel partly black, or shady, partly light and brilliant, thus indicating their notions of the Deity, they profess to think of his nature, as of this sacred cloathing: and the dressing the votaries of Isis when dead, in the same apparel, is a sign, that these opinions are still with them, and that they departed from life, in the full persuasion of this, rejecting every other doctrine."

* The first scene ever used, was, perhaps, the sacred Peplum. The mere display of this to the people, by torchlight, would have produced the effect of a transparency.

*Preparation for the Mysteries.—Use of the Intaglio.—Offices of the Priests.—The Descent of Bacchus under various characters* ad inferos ; *his Voyage over the Styx, and Re-ascent exhibited as a mystical Drama, in a Succession of transparent Scenes, viz. different Vases and Gems.*

After the enchanting glimpse of the mysteries already quoted, I despair of producing a spectacle that shall equal the language of the Baron de Ste. Croix. The swelling symphony, the airy strains of invisible spirits, I cannot promise to the stranger who shall consult these pages ; and even the "*discours sacrés*," if by these words I may understand the exposition of the Hierophant, will be but imperfectly given. The eloquent Aristophanes, indeed, in his moments of sober propriety, will supply a chorus which needs not the aid of a well-appointed orchestra to give it effect ; but my design is chiefly to render the lovers of Greek antiquity Ἐπόπλας, or spectators in these shews, by admitting them to a nearer view of which I may, at least, excite their curiosity respecting a highly interesting department of the antique, for which a taste is much increased of late in this country, and of which we now possess many beautiful specimens. For this purpose I have compiled a short drama, which may illustrate the general subject of this disquisition ; and although the theatre at Eleusis has been long since destroyed, its scenes mutilated,

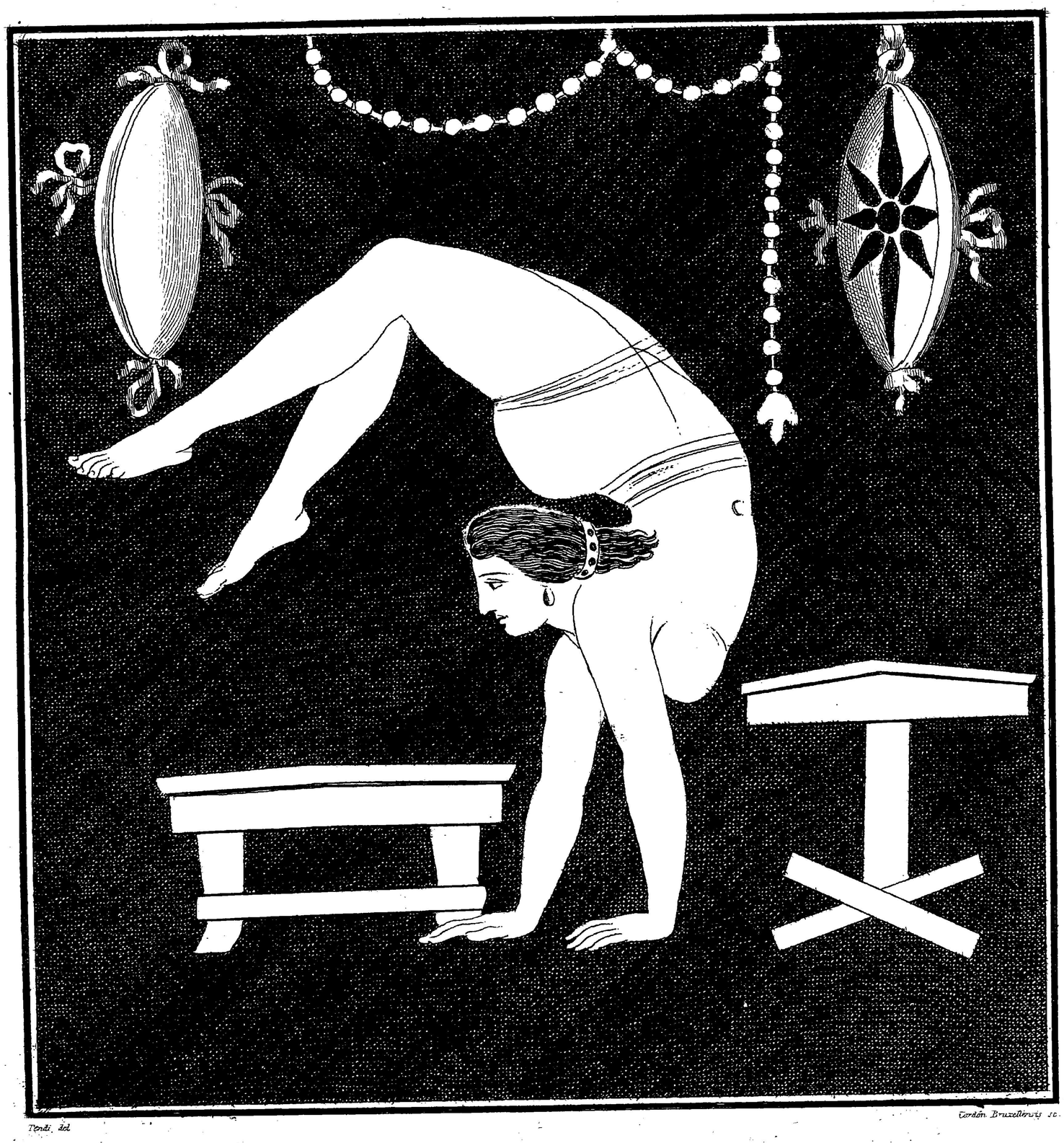
dispersed, and forgotten; nevertheless, from the remains of them, I have attempted to collect a series of transparencies that I flattered myself would appear in tolerable regularity of succession. In selecting these from Etruscan vases, I found the continuity more interrupted than I at first expected, and I have been obliged to supply the deficiency from ancient gems, which liberty, I trust, will be conceded to me, when the nature of the intaglio is considered; for this, executed in cornelian, sardine, or other diaphanous stones, is of itself a *solar transparency*, and such, as worn on the finger of a Greek who had been initiated, must have recalled in a very pleasing way those awful, but ravishing spectacles, of which it furnished an imitation both elegant and portable.

Thus prepared for the undertaking, having adapted my scenes, although it may be no very creditable employment to engage as mechanist of a theatre, yet, since the Greeks deigned to receive the mysterious doctrine of their religion from pantomimic representations, and since men of erudition have in later times condescended to direct their researches to the nature of them, I may, surely, be permitted to ascend the stage, and, as the different illumined paintings pass before the reader's eye, to take upon myself, (as far as may be allowable for the immediate purpose,) the office of hierophant, or expositor. "*Καὶ ἐγὼ ποιήσω Ἱεροφάντην.*" It may not, however, be amiss, first to drop a remark respecting the character of the person who anciently officiated under that title, and also of his assistants.

We learn that, on these occasions, the Hierophant personated the *Δημιουργὸς*, or Creator, but the reason of his assuming that character no writer has disclosed to us. The genuine

meaning of the word is *artifex*, *opifex*, and it might be supposed to indicate, merely the priest who set the mystic *fantoccini* in motion, and who explained their allegoric meaning. But it is not improbable, that in the Mysteries of Eleusis, the priests were originally actors in a drama, wherein the Demiurgus exposed the notions of the ancients respecting the cosmogony, while the representatives of the sun and moon enforced the system of decay and reproduction; but in later times, when the shews were necessarily celebrated on a larger scale, the mysteries were then illustrated by scenery, as a more compendious and striking mode of instructing the spectators. The torch-bearer was then perhaps appointed to purify the Mystæ previous to initiation, the sacred herald announced the ceremonies to be complied with during the celebration of the greater mysteries, whilst the assistant at the altar might have deduced useful conclusions for the moral conduct of the people. The priests,* although their offices were changed, nevertheless retained their ancient attire, and this appears to be recorded in the words of Eusebius, *Ὁ μὲν Ἱεροφάντης εἰς εἰκόνα τοῦ Δημιουργοῦ ἐνσκευάζεται*, that the Hierophant was attired as an allegorical image of the Creating Power, in like manner, the *Δᾳδοῦχος* of the sun, the assistant *ἐπὶ βωμῷ* of the moon, and the *Ἱεροκήρυξ* of Hermes.

* Their number was four, corresponding with the three Cabiri and Camillus in Samothrace.



*Tondi. del.* *Cordon. Bruxellensis sc.*

*In Museo Townleiano alt: unc: 11.*




*Sardæ incis: ex Dactyl: Townleianâ.*



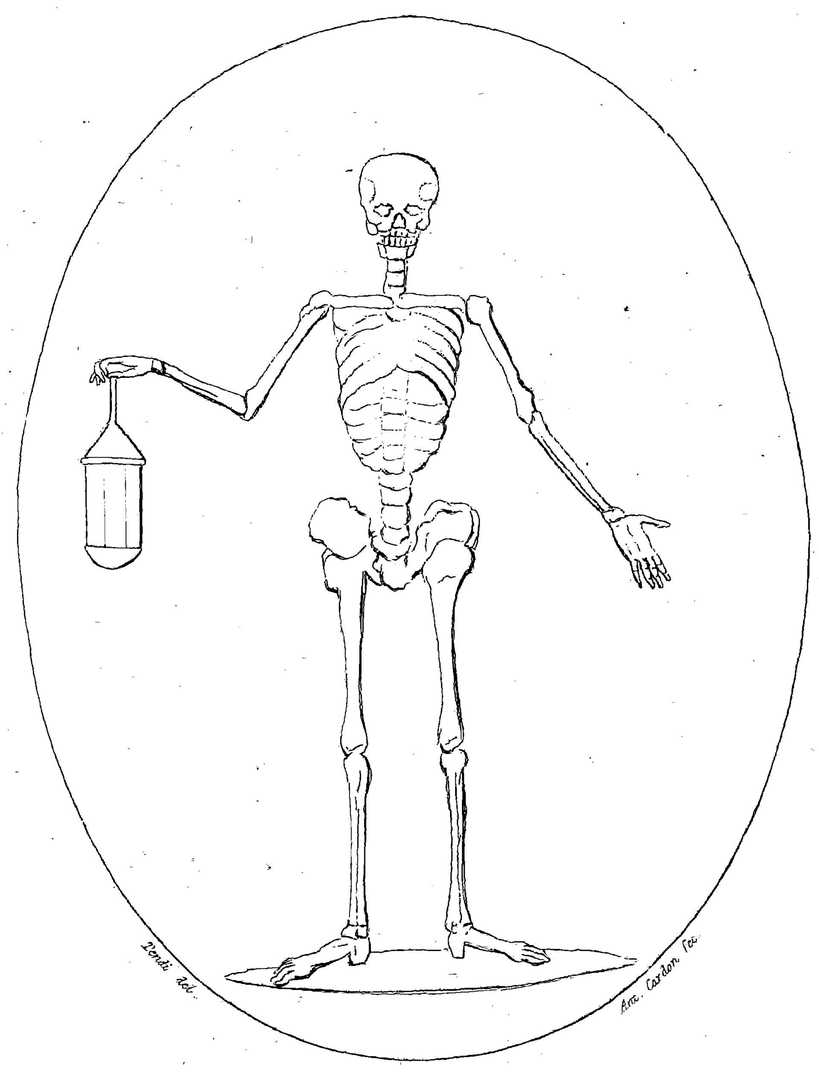

*Ex Diaglypho, in Pastâ, Dactyl: Townleiana.*



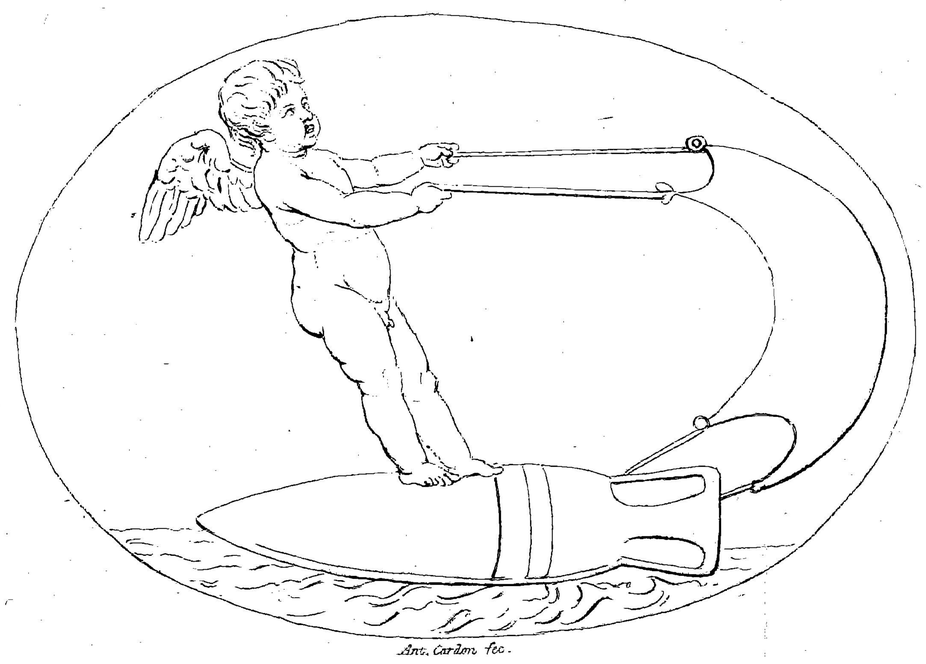
*Ex pastâ Dactyl: Townleianæ.*



Ex Scarabæo in Sardonyche Musei Townleiani.




Ex Dactyl. Townleianâ.



*Ant. Cardon fec.*

*Ex Museo Florentino.*



Tondo del.

Cardon Bruxellensis sc.

In Museo Townleiano alt: unc: 10.

# ARGUMENT OF THE FABLE.

## PLATE I.

*Of the Rotation, or Revolution of Nature.*

THE allegory conveyed in this first painting comprises the general meaning of the scenes which follow. The vicissitude of decay and reproduction, to which, according to the notions of the ancients, nature was subject in perpetual revolution, is expressed by a female figure tumbling. The order of nature is for a moment inverted, but, by an effort of the limbs, the body appears on the point of being returned to its proper attitude.

¶. These tumblers were styled κυβιστητηρες, from κυβισάω, a word derived from κύβη, caput, that is, in caput deferor, devolvórque; but which may also signify to turn over as a die, and κυβισάω is sometimes used in the sense of *taxillis ludere*, to play with dice: even dice were anciently viewed in the same mystical sense with that which is conveyed by this female tumbler.

This painting, (copied from a vase, the use of which, and of the inedited monuments that follow, I have to reckon among the numerous kindnesses that endear to me the memory of Charles Townley, Esq.) may illustrate some lines of Homer, who, in his description of the Cretan dance on the shield of Achilles, introduces two tumblers into the middle of the circle, which performed their feats in cadence, whilst the young men and women danced round them:

——— δοιὼ δὲ κυβιστητῆρε κατ' αὐτοὺς,
Μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντος, ἐδίνευον κατὰ μέσσους.

*Iliad* Σ. *v.* 604, 5.

Should the foregoing allegory be deemed absurdly applied, I readily agree in the charge; but these are the absurdities

which were so severely reproved by the Fathers of the Church, such as might be expected *ματαιόφρονος Ἐρεχθειδῶν δήμου* from the vain and foolish-minded posterity of Erectheus. It is no part of my design to restore the religion of the ancients to its original dignity,* nor to defend those who formerly professed it, from the injurious charge of heathenism or paganism.† Rather let its absurdities be displayed.—By discovering how much was required, we shall be sensible how much we have gained, for one of the first evidences of the truth of Christianity arises from the necessity of its healing intervention.

" Nihil enim adversus pietatem, ac bonos mores moli*m*ur; nam veterum superstitionum ritibus expositis, religionis Christianæ veritas, ac majestas, veluti lux in tenebris magis, magisque elucebit."‡

## PLATE II.

*Bacchus in the form of a Vase, carried* ad inferos.

In the following scenes we shall be made acquainted with the mythological Bacchus, in whose person were embodied the theological notions of the ancients. We shall view him, who by ancient mystagogues was termed " the firstborn of the unknown father,§" who was invested with the power of creating, preserving, and destroying, himself subject to the same

* See the Preface to the Essay of Mr. Le Clerc de Septchenes upon the Religion of the Greeks. I quote from the English edition in octavo.

† Ibid.

‡ Adprobatio Jo. Baptistæ Vicecomitis in Passerii de Pict. Hetrusc. in Vasc. V. II.

§ " Ignoti vis celsa Patris, vel prima propago." *Martianus Capella, l. 2, p. 43.*

vicissitudes. In him we shall see cause put for effect, and *vice versâ:* inert, yet producing activity, active and passive, male and female,* he will not only give various forms to matter,

"Υλην ἀλλάσσων ἱερὴν ἰδέαις πολυμόρφοις,"†

but we shall also have reason to concur with the poet, in considering him αἰολόμορφον ἄνακτα;‡ the power who could assume various shapes at pleasure; he will appear alternately extinguished and rekindled σβεννύμενος λάμπων τε,§ in fine we shall observe in him, though governor of nature, a type of nature itself, and all the successive changes to which it is subject.

It has already been observed, that the vase is the *Larva*, or substitute for the person, it may therefore be admitted that the descent of Bacchus might be implied by the deportation of the vase *ad inferos*. It is in the form of an Amphora that we now discover him borne to the lower hemisphere by the destroying Harpy, in whose hand the emblematical torch is depressed, to denote suspended animation. The same might be further proved from various gems, where a corpse or a

* According to the Orphic invocation Πρωτογόνον—διφυῆ—*Hymn.* 5, *v.* 1. Thus the Demiurgic Bacchus was named both *Liber* and *Libera*, to account for which I must have recourse to the Ægyptian theology:—according to this, Osiris was, indeed, the representative of the Deity; nevertheless, it appears that Isis, or the moon, was the more immediate object of reverence. The cause is explained by Plutarch *de Is. et Osir.* sect. 43, p. 110. For, though the sun Osiris impregnate her, yet she again impregnates the universe, by scattering over it the principles of generation, of vegetation and life. She is therefore termed male and female: female, as receiving from the sun; male, as giving to the universe.

† Hymn. 24, v. 3.

‡ Hymn. 38, v. 5 See Dr. Blackwall, p. 145.

§ Hymn. 55, v. 5.

terminus are indifferently carried, as in the present scene, but it is needless to adduce them in this place.*

## PLATE III.

*Descent of the Phanes* ad inferos.

THIS beautiful gem exhibits the infant Dioscurus hooded, and bearing the Bacchus, under the form of a lantern, to the lower regions.—*Similar subjects may be seen in the Mus. Florentin. Vol. I. Plate LXXX. fig.* 2, 3, 6.

## PLATE IV.

*Bacchus in the form of a Lantern crosses the Styx.*

WHENCE is it that the vase and lantern are so intimately connected?—that Greece and China partook in the same allegories, and adopted ceremonies similar in spirit and meaning? I know not how to resolve the question, but I consider this gem, compared with that which follows, to be a full and curious confirmation of the fact. The Dioscurus here appears an emaciated elder conducting the Phanes, or Bacchus, over the Styx.

* Such gems are actually in the Townley collection. Upon a painted tazza, in the collection of Thomas Hope, Esq. the Dioscurus appears bending under the weight of a tortoise, which, as the emblem of sluggish, inert nature, he bears *ad inferos*. The tortoise is kept steady upon his back by a thong, or strap, passed over one end of the shell.

## PLATE V.

*Arrival of the Amphora at the Cavern of Hades.*

Pursuing the subject, we again find Bacchus in the form of an Amphora completing his voyage* to the Cavern of Hades, where Cerberus, barking, announces his approach. The Clepsydra or water-clock, which appears in the form of an hour-glass, in the boat of Charon, has an allegorical meaning: the noise made by the turning of this, when the pleadings in the courts of justice among the ancients were finished, was termed *pacsha*, a word implying *turn*, or *change*, as we are informed by Capt. Wilford.† It is therefore probable, that the water-clock in the present gem might be the symbol of vicissitude, whereby a promise of return is made to Bacchus in his visit to the shades.

## PLATE VI.

*Bacchus as a Lantern* in inferis.

We here observe the nearly extinguished Phanes *in inferis* held by a skeleton, which, erect and motionless, seems to partake of the nature of a Terminus, designed to express that point in the lower hemisphere, whence nature emerging shall resume her former activity: for it is an original suggestion of my very learned and excellent friend, the Rev. Dr. Henley, that

* I find this subject expressed in a ludicrous way in an ancient fresco painting, which exhibits the Dioscuri by two grotesque figures conveying a boat-load of vases over the Styx. See Antich. d'Ercolano Pitture, Vol. V. Pl. LXVII.

† Asiat. Researches, Vol. V. p. 301, octavo.

the pillar (to which I would also compare the Terminus) symbolically considered denotes the solstice, the apparent temporary resting place of the sun at the furthest extent of his course, whether in the upper or lower hemisphere.

## PLATE VII.

*Return of the Amphora.**

THE return of Bacchus is here neatly expressed by a winged genius upon the Amphora, which is wafted along by means of a hoisted sail.

## PLATE VIII.

*Bacchus having again assumed the form of a Vase, is brought up from the* Inferi.

AT length the various characters assumed by this changeable deity have been traced through their mystic revolutions, excepting that it remains for me to bring up the vase to the upper hemisphere. A painting from an inedited vase in the Townley Collection, may serve to unravel my drama. In this the generative power, characterised by Priapeid ears and horns, emerges from the marshy shores of the Styx, bringing up the *Amphora* from the *Inferi*. The broad leaves of the lotus by which he is surrounded, have their peculiar signification; and this will more plainly appear to the reader, when I shall explain the emblematical reference of this aquatic plant to creation.

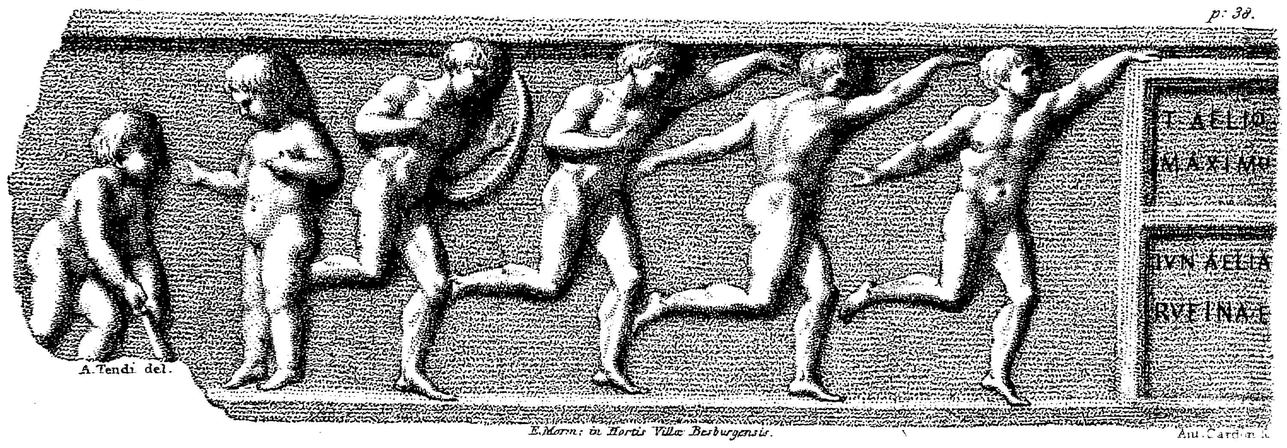
* From the Museum Florentinum, Vol. I. Pl. LXXVII. Fig. 1.

Before I dismiss the spectators, I cannot refrain from expressing my pleasure, that a satisfactory explanation has at length been found by that learned Asiatic antiquary Capt. Francis Wilford,* for those mystic words *Κὸγξ, ὄμπαξ*, Konx, ompax,† which closed the celebration of the mysteries, by him proved to be of Indian etymology. Father Paolino‡ was struck with the apparent correspondence of many Indian ceremonies with others which he had formerly noticed upon the Grecian vases, and he has asserted, that a satisfactory explanation of the latter could not be given, until they were compared with the manners of the Orientals. Although I do not apprehend this correspondence can be traced to any great extent, yet I have had reason to be satisfied of the justness of the remark upon a few occasions, and I may probably adduce something in favour of it hereafter.

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. V. p. 300.

† In Sanscrit, *Canscha, om, pacsha.* The first of these signifying "The object of our most ardent wishes." *Om*, the monosyllable used at the beginning and conclusion of a prayer, like *amen. Pacsha* answering to the obsolete Latin word *vix*, and signifying, "change, course, stead, place, turn of work, duty, fortune." *Ibid. p.* 300.

‡ Paolino's Travels, p. 255. English ed. octavo.




*Eastern Illuminations and the Eleusinian Shows compared.*

THE custom of illuminating with torches or lamps, at certain times of the year, has been common in many parts of the East. It obtained in Ægypt and Phœnicia, in which countries it was designed for a religious ceremony. It likewise constituted a particular festival at Athens, the Lampadophoria, which were celebrated in honour of Minerva, Prometheus, and Hephæstus. They consisted of a race, on foot or on horse-back, during which the lamp, or torch, was passed from youth to youth, and if in the hand of any one who received it, the flame of it were extinguished, such a one lost his privilege of partaking in the sport. Lucretius assures us that this torch denoted the lamp of life: "Et, quasi cursores, vitaï lampada tradunt," *l.* 2, *v.* 78. And we may add, that the passing of it from hand to hand denoted the transition of the animating principle through the circle of various bodies, according to the doctrine of the Metempsychosis.* The vignette given above, is copied from an antique bas-relief to be seen in the wall of a temple which the late venerable Earl of Besborough erected at his villa at Roehampton, as the temple of Virtue and Honour, to receive

* See the note of Creech upon the passage.

the busts of different worthies: it is a funeral monument, exhibiting a race of naked youths* towards a sepulchre, and the infant Dioscuri behind them, one of whom inverts his torch to signify that the competitors in this race are thrown out from the circle. Capt. Turner has informed us,† that in those illuminations which are made in the East on the 29th of October, if the flame be extinguished, it is considered a most evil omen, the cause of which is to be explained from the Athenian feast of lamps, which was held in the Potter's Way, where similar mismanagement amongst the youths who ran, was deemed equally unfortunate. We now discover the origin and meaning of those illuminations so frequent in the East, as during the Dewali in Hindustan, which falls soon after the autumnal equinox:‡ for as the sun about that time goes down into the lower hemisphere, these illuminations anticipate the return of his light, and this festival is accordingly held in honour of the dead,§ to whom, as at Eleusis, was indicated a similar return from the shades.‖ Even that autumnal feast,

* It is not merely by way of justifying my explanation of this bas-relief, which exhibits a race of four youths, that I dissent from the conclusion drawn by Meursius from a passage in Pausanias, and a scholium upon Persius, that only three youths contended in the Lampadophoria. For though the former authority be neither way decisive, yet it appears to me, that the concluding words of the scholiast give the question against the learned critic: "Qui victor esset, primus facem tollebat, deinde sequenti se tradebat, et secundus tertio: *similiter omnes, donec currentium numerus impleretur.*" *Vide Meursii Græc. Feriat. p.* 189.

† Embassy to Tibet, p. 318.

‡ The Dussera is celebrated on the first full moon after the autumnal equinox: the Dewali on the new moon following. Turner's Tibet, p. 163.

§ In an old MS. tract on the Roman, Greek, and Hebrew Calendars, I find it expressed, "that the Pelasgi, after they had been happily taught that φῶς signified as well *light* as a *man*, they began to light torches, &c. and throw about lighted tapers.

‖ Thus Dr. Kæmpfer informs us of the Japanese: "On the 8th of August, there was another festival called *Bon*. People on that occasion attend for one whole night

the Mullaum in Bootan, and the correspondent Durga Poojah of the Hindus, though now appearing to present a moral scenic exhibition, it may be presumed, had once, at least, a different meaning. The first of these, we are informed, is celebrated for ten days.*—What then forbids our comparing its spirit and meaning with the Eleusinian mysteries, which lasted nearly an equal number.† The Durga Poojah, we are told, consists in the display of a gaudy scene, with Durga, and various figures in alto-relief, loaded with tinsel and other ornaments. At the close of the exhibition, it is conducted to the Ganges, to the waves of which it is committed with due solemnity. Who does not here discover the ornamented statue of the goddess in the temple at Eleusis, "frottée avec soin,

at the tombs of their ancestors and relations, with lights and lanthorns. The solemnity of this festival began upon the 7th, and lasted for three days together. They believe, that the souls of deceased persons, whether they led a good or bad life, walk about, and visit the places of their former abode." *History of Japan, p.* 563.

* Embassy to Tibet, p. 162.

† The Eleusinian mysteries, which began on the 15th of Boedromion (about the month of September), were celebrated nine days. It is probable, however, that the scenic exhibitions only took place on the first, fifth, and eighth day, since the intermediate ceremonies partly consisted of processions in the open air. Meursius has thus enumerated them:

1. Ἀγυρμὸς, the general meeting for initiation.
2. Ἅλαδε μύσται, a procession to the sea-side.
3. The sacrifice of a mullet.
4. The procession with the cista mystica.
5. A procession of the Mystæ, with torches, by night. From the following line of Æschylus, however, Λαμπραῖσιν ἀστραπαῖσι λαμπάδων σθένει, it is probable that transparent scenes *strongly* illumined with lamps from behind, were then exhibited.
6. The procession with the statue of Iacchus from Athens to Eleusis.
7. An athletic contest.
8. Epidauria, a renewal of the ceremonies of the first day, for the sake of those who were prevented attending at the ἀγυρμός.
9. The ceremony of pouring wine from the vessels called πλημοχόαι.

ornée avec gout, et revêtue de ses plus beaux habits,"—as described by the Baron de Ste. Croix? Whence we may possibly be furnished with a solution of that expression, upon which the learned Meursius exercised his ingenuity with much felicity, *ΑΛΑΔΕ ΜΥΣΤΑΙ*,—"To the sea, O Mystæ!"—which gave the name to a particular day of the mysteries. Transfer this chain of reasoning to China, where similar ceremonies prevail:* the Pelasgic equivoque is equally manifest in the Chinese feast of Lanterns. The object of it has equally reference to the astronomical descent and return of the sun, and the application of this allegory to the resuscitation of the dead. I have shewn this (*προσπαίζων* indeed) in my Eleusinian drama, but I now appeal to the discernment of my reader, whether the serious and instructive moral, inculcated by these transparent illuminations, were not of similar tendency in Greece and China.

* According to the most reasonable accounts, the Chinese derive their feast of Lanterns from a Mandarin (*Peirun*) whose daughter perished in a river, and from his seeking her by torchlight. Mr. Boulanger, Tom. III. p. 51, compares this Mandarin and his daughter to Ceres and Proserpine; and he adds, it is for those who have acquaintance with the Chinese language to seek in the etymology of their names, whether his conjecture be well founded. This festival is held in February, soon after the opening of the new year. The sign Aquarius is accordingly termed in the Chinese language, "The *Resurrection* of the Spring." *Boulanger, Vol.* III. *p.* 167.

*Origin of the Vase.—Of the Ægyptian Canopus.—Symbol of Creation from Water.—The Vase hence selected to commemorate the Mysteries.*

My object hitherto has been rather to display the general nature of the shews at Eleusis, and their connection with Etruscan vases, than fully to elucidate the mysteries; a particular acquaintance with which will be best obtained from an examination of symbols, and the force of them when employed upon these ancient works of art. It is probable that initiation, whichw as anciently preceded, whether at Agra or Eleusis, by purification, and other such mysterious ceremonies, chiefly consisted in a knowledge of symbols, which knowledge perhaps was catechetically imparted by the priests in separate chambers, and from these the Mystæ were afterwards admitted to the theatre. The audience, already acquainted with the symbols, would thus anticipate the meaning of the inferior parts of the illumined paintings, and much trouble would consequently be saved to the Hierophant. From a passage of Proclus, however, it appears that even certain symbols, of more myserious signification, were also reserved for explanation in the general scenic exhibition; for I cannot agree with Meursius, in supposing that these emblems, which were only (γνώριμα) understood by the initiator, were ever withholden from the sight or knowledge of the Epoptæ. Proclus observes:—*Τῶν ὑπὸ τῆς τελεστικῆς ἱδρυμένων ἀγαλμάτων τὰ μέν ἐστιν ἐμφανῆ, τὰ δὲ ἔνδον ἀποκρύπτεται, σύμβολα τῆς θεῶν παρουσίας, ἃ καὶ μόνοις ἔστι γνώριμα τοῖς τελεσταῖς.* Proclus in Timæum Comm. II.—"Of the figures

which are devised according to the spirit of the mysteries, the meaning of some is evident, but others have a secret signification, (such as symbols of the attributes of the deity brought before the spectator's eye), with which those who initiate the Mystæ are alone acquainted.*

But since the vase itself was used for a symbol, the origin of it, and the cause of its having been so applied become proper objects for early investigation.

The remarks of D'Hancarville upon the invention of the potter's wheel by the Athenians, remove our enquiry respecting the vase from Italy, and conduct us to the spot, where, at least, the allegorical paintings upon it were first devised. But in relying wholly upon the authority cited by this judicious antiquary, do we not ascribe more ingenuity to the Athenians, than should in fairness be placed to their credit?—May we not suppose that Ægypt had furnished them with the means of *turning* these vessels, since the Ægyptians must have been in the knowledge and use of the potter's wheel for the manufacture of their ancient emblem of the deity, the Canopus? To me it appears probable that the construction of the Greek vase was thus suggested, although by the embellishment of allegorical paintings, and by the further mystic application of it by the Athenians, the invention became as it were their own.

It is indeed scarcely decided, what was the use and meaning of this sacred Ægyptian vessel: the Abbé Pluches has very

* The explanation of Meursius to which I object, is as follows:—"et ecce, ne Epoptis quidem, atque in adyta jam admissis, omnia revelabantur; sed adservabantur quædam, non adspicienda ulli, præterquam ipsis sacrorum præfectis, qui Mystas, Epoptásque creabant." *Meursii Eleusinia, p.* 25.

unsatisfactorily explained it to be a nilometer, and the etymology presented us by the learned Schläger,* though bearing the mark of authenticity, seems to involve the subject in fresh uncertainty. I had formerly thought, that the Canopus was designed to answer the purpose of a water clock, since the ancient story of the contest between certain Ægyptian and Chaldæan priests, represents it as a perforated vessel, through the bottom of which water was suffered to drip, after the manner of the Clepsydra, and in that contest it was proposed by the Ægyptians as the symbol of water and of their deity, in opposition to the Chaldæan divinity, whose attributes were emblematically represented by fire.

Certain objections are, however, opposed to this idea by Schlichtegroll, in his Illustrations of Baron Stosch's Gems. No Canopus, it seems, has ever yet been found in any other than a solid state, although Plutarch declares the use of it as a vessel to filter the muddy water of the Nile; and as for the story of the Ægyptian and Chaldæan contest, it is only reported by Rufinus, who lived so late as the fourth century. Rufinus, however, had visited Ægypt, and probably had authority for this tradition. Amidst these doubts, I gladly embrace the opinion of a learned and excellent friend, who, deeply versed in most matters of antiquity, has particularly directed his attention to subjects of the present nature. The Canopus, which is generally surmounted by a head, as it were

* In his tract de Nummo Hadriani et de Gemmâ Isiacâ in medicato funere Ægyptiaco repertis. In this valuable tract he observes from Aristides that the Ægyptian word for the Canopus signifies χρυσῆν ἔδαφος, *golden ground*, which is actually expressed in the language of Lower Ægypt KA'HN̄NOTB (cah annoub), golden ground. But Schläger goes no further than refer this epithet to the fertility of soil about the city Canopus.

growing out from it, he refers to the renewal of vegetation, and to the reptiles generated from the slime and mud deposited after the decrease of the Nile. This explanation aptly agrees with the "golden ground" of Aristides, and the etymology given by Schläger; nor do I conceive, it will be deemed violence offered to these opinions, if I term the Canopus a symbol of creation from water. Upon those vases, indeed, of a globular form, which are distinguished by narrow and perpendicular ears or handles, and even upon those of larger size, which are found in the ancient Apulia, may be observed small knobs, which, to a fanciful eye, might represent the horns of the young Bacchus just sprouting, but, in fact, they represent those buds, which the swelling mass, or clod, pregnant with vegetation, may be conceived to be then putting forth; and in these instances the Greek vase differs but little from the Ægyptian Canopus:—like that, it was a symbol of creation from water.—For this reason the Lotus was also referred to as a model for its elegant form:* and it was used with great propriety as the Larva of Bacchus, who was the god of humid nature. The religious contest beforementioned seems to have partaken of that well known jealousy which has from early time existed in India, where the favourite deity of each sect is distinguished by his proper symbol: the preserver Vishnu by water, the destroyer Siva by fire. From this fragment of their religious history, it would appear that the Ægyptians had attached themselves to the milder system; and if, as we

* Thus the perfect flower of the plant was the model for the bell-shaped vase; the full or overblown flower is represented by the tazza. See an elegant engraving of the Chinese Lotus employed as a tazza, in the splendid work of Dr. Hager on Chinese Coins, recently published at Paris

are assured, the Eleusinian mysteries came either mediately or immediately from Ægypt to Greece, the doctrine of preservation, of which water was the symbol, must have been the basis upon which they were founded; and they would naturally have held out "*a better hope*" to the gloomy Pelasgi in Greece, who, if we except the single instance of the fate of Orpheus, seem to have otherwise thankfully admitted the salutary doctrine.

These remarks, as to the origin of the vase, I trust, explain why this class of ancient vessels was chosen to commemorate the mysteries in preference to any other utensil.

*Theology of the Ancients founded on Natural Philosophy,—conveyed only by Ænigma and Allegory.—Groupes on Vases ænigmatical.—Explanation of a Sicilian Vase, illustrating the Mysteries of the Idæi Dactyli.*

We are assured by Plutarch, that "the mysterious theology of the ancients, both Greeks and Barbarians, consisted of natural philosophy wrapped up in fable, and rendered obscure from the ænigmatical allusions under which it was conveyed.*" Now, it is evident that the vases termed Etruscan could only have been deposited in tombs for a religious purpose, and to me there scarcely appears room for doubting, that the groupes depicted upon them are ænigmatical, and have intimate connection with that theology, the spirit of which is thus briefly explained by Plutarch.—But my reader waits to be informed of the import of symbols, and he may require a more serious exposition of these illumined scenes than I have yet produced. I now therefore propose to satisfy his curiosity, by submitting a few of these transparencies, which I shall explain after my own method: I shall also direct the application of a few striking symbols in others accordingly. I will afterwards notice, how those admitted to the mysteries could have grounded a hope of bettering their condition upon such speculations, and conclude with some remarks upon the probable nature of that expectation.

* Ἡ μὲν ϖαλαιὰ φυσιολογία, καὶ ϖαρ' Ἕλλησι καὶ βαρβαροῖς, λόγος ἦν φυσικὸς ἐγκεκαλυμμένος μύθοις, τὰ ϖολλὰ δι' αἰνιγματῶν καὶ ὑπονοιῶν ἐπίκρυφος, καὶ μυςηριώδης θεολογία. *Plutarch: apud Eusebium de præp. Evang. l. 3, c. 1.*

# PLATE XI.

*Explanation of a Sicilian Vase, illustrating the Mysteries of the Idæi Dactyli.*

It is observed by the author of the Essay upon the Mysteries of Paganism, that the first inhabitants of Greece deified heaven and earth, and paid them worship. Thus the Chinese imagined those principles Yang, and Yn,* which they represented by an entire line and a divided one, terming them the perfect and imperfect, heaven and earth, male and female. The Japanese doctrine respecting In, and Jo,† was grounded upon similar principles. I suspect these male and female properties to be no other than the elements fire and earth, if not rather fire and water, from the co-operation of which the creation of all things was supposed to have proceeded.

I hope to elucidate this matter in a satisfactory way, by means of a painting upon an ancient Sicilian vase,‡ with the

* See Dr. Hager's Explanation of the Elementary Characters of the Chinese, p. 5.

† Dr. Kæmpfer observes that certain of the Japanese philosophers admitted an intellectual, or incorporeal being, but only as governor and director, not as the author of nature; nay, they pretended, that it is an effect of nature produced by In and Jo, heaven and earth; one active, the other passive; one the principle of generation, the other of corruption: *History of Japan, p.* 250. These opposite principles are elsewhere reported, *p.* 601, to be represented before the Daibod's Temple, near Miaco, by two images of giants, called A-wun, or In-Jo, or Ni-wo, one with the mouth open and the hand extended, the other with the mouth shut and the hand brought close to the body.

‡ It may be generally remarked, that the paintings upon the vases of Nola, wherein the ground is opaque, exhibit allegorical scenes *in inferis*. The middle-sized and small Sicilian vases, on the contrary, exhibit such as refer to the cosmogony; and



Tendi del:

Ant: Cardon fc:

*In Bibliotheca I. Edwards Armig: alt: unc: 14.*

use of which I have been obligingly favoured by J. Edwards, Esq. I had not long examined this vessel, before I discovered upon it certain of the Idæi Dactyli, whose names had been selected by the Baron de Ste. Croix,* from the Scholiast of Apollonius Rhodius, lib. i. v. 1129. The subject I conceive to be Acmon and Damnameneus proceeding to animate the universe by means of their minister Celmis; illustrated by the allegory of Pan, in a sitting posture, waiting for his torch to be lighted by them at the furnace of Hephæstus.

I presume that I am not mistaken in my conjecture, because Ἄκμων, which in Greek denotes an *anvil*, (whence the word πυράκμων, a blacksmith,) has also the signification of οὐρανὸς, heaven.† The first of these figures then, denotes celestial fire, and identifies one of the properties beforementioned. Damnameneus, evidently composed of the words δαμνάω, *domo*, *reprimo*, and μένος, *vis*, *robur*, is that which allayeth the power of fire, or which tempereth metals that fire hath fused: WATER. The Baron de Ste. Croix would explain this to be earth, but it was an anciently received opinion that earth was a deposition, or sediment from water. Κέλμις I would deduce from κέλομαι, *jubeo*, one who receives orders, the same as Camillus, Hermes, and Mercury; or the agent who executes commands, since the hand stretched forth over the head of Pan, rather conveys the latter meaning. Pan is no more than τὸ πᾶν, the universe. Ptha, or Hephæstus, who, according to Ægyptian

these are frequently covered with very whimsical designs. The collector who may prefer entertainment and information to mere elegance of shape and ornament, might do well to confine his purchases to the latter class.

* *Sur les Mysteres du Paganisme*, p. 46, 7.

† Hesychius in voce.

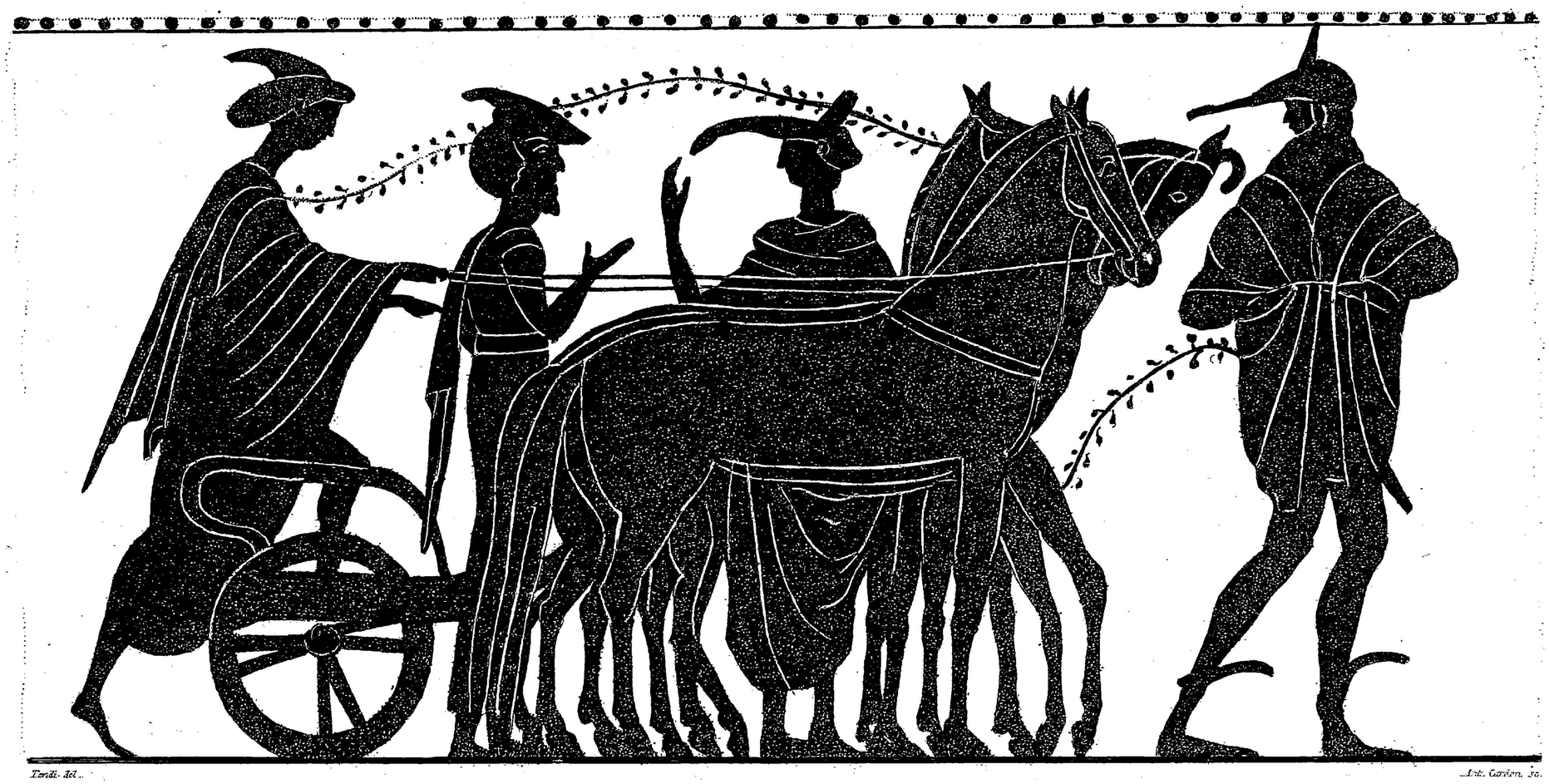
mythologists, was produced from the egg in the mouth of the supreme Cneph, is here introduced to us as the Demiurgic deity, conducting the process of creation in the great workshop of Nature. The animation of the universe personated by Pan, may also be collected from two interesting plates in the Work of D'Hancarville, the first of these, Vol. III. Plate XCIV. where Pan crouches under the weight of the sphere, and listens to the instructions of a figure, which I venture to term Celmis. In the other, Vol. IV. Plate CXVIII. Celmis presents two eggs as a vivifying gift, influenced by which, Pan, supporting only the lower portion of a sphere, falls a dancing with the most absurd and ridiculous gestures.

The mystical meaning of the torch is well ascertained by that line of Lucretius:

> " Et, quasi cursores, vitaï lampada tradunt." *l.* 2, *v.*78.

It is here, neither elevated to denote life, nor depressed to denote suspended animation, but characteristically held in a horizontal direction. As the principle of life to the universe, it is a symbol of the sun, which idea occurs to me upon adverting to a passage in the Ezour Vedam; in which pleasing little work, (evidently composed by some European missionary* for an excellent purpose,) is the following apostrophe: " Le Soleil que tu as divinisé, n'est qu'un corps sans vie et sans connoissance. Il est entre les mains de Dieu comme une chandelle entre les mains d'un homme. Créé de lui pour éclairer le monde, il obéit à sa voix et répand par-tout sa lu-

* I believe it to be the same work that is noticed by Father Giorgi, Alph. Tibet. p. 94, as the production of the Capuchin Missionaries in India.



*Tardi. del.* *Ant. Cardon. Sc.*

*Ex cimelis G: Chinnery Armig: alt: unc: 11.*

miere comme une chandelle qui commence à éclairer dès qu'on l'allume." Vol. I. p. 226, 7. "The sun, which you have elevated to the rank of a deity, is no more than a lifeless and unintelligent body. It is in the hands of God, as a candle in the hand of a man; created by Him for the purpose of lighting the world, it obeys his word; and disperses every where its light, in the same way as a candle throws its beams the moment it is lighted."

To this it may be properly added, that the most ancient Osiris of the Ægyptians, for there were many of the name, was supposed to be the son of Vulcan, and was entitled Tosorthrus,* a word that, according to Father Giorgi,† signifies "*Filius Fornacis*," "the Son of the Furnace."

## PLATE X.

*Harmonious Arrangement of the Universe by the Deity.*

According to Plutarch, when Osiris had settled the affairs of his government at home, he set out to civilise the rest of mankind,—πειθοῖ δὲ τοὺς πλείστους καὶ λόγῳ μετ' ᾠδῆς πάσης καὶ μουσικῆς θελγομένους προσαγόμενον, *de Iside et Osir. s.* XIII. *p.* 32: "by persuasion and argument, with every kind of song and music, he

* Plures fuerunt in Ægypto Reges Osirides; quorum primus a Bonjurio statuitur Tosorthrus filius Necher-Ophis Vulcani, omniumque Ægyptiorum Regum antiquissimi. *Alph. Tibet. p.* 71.

† "Tosorthrus hic idem esse posset tanquam ⲧⲟⲩⲥⲉⲣ-ⲧⲥⲣⲁ, *Touser-thro*, et Græca terminatione Tousorthros *filius fornacis*, sive Vulcani filius.—ⲧ enim articulus fœmineus ideo præ-figitur, quia ⲥⲣⲁ fornax generis est fœminei." *Ibid. p.* 75.

soothed the minds of men, and brought them over." Now, as to what may have been the origin of this tradition, and who, the person shadowed under the name of Osiris, I shall not here make it my business to enquire. But I suspect, that the expedition of Osiris, and the manner in which the object of it was accomplished, were anciently converted into a religious allegory, by which a well-known human event was made a type of the harmonious arrangement of the universe by the Deity.

I suspect this, because Plato, whose philosophy and language are frequently borrowed by Plutarch, had before said, that the Deity created all things πειθοῖ καὶ λόγῳ, "by persuasion and reason."—The representations on vases, of a figure setting out in a quadriga, preceded by Camillus, or Mercury petasated and booted, and bearing the Caduceus, while an attendant by the side of the car plays upon the lyre, or beckons with the arm uplifted; these I venture to term, the expedition of the Deity, either in his male or female nature, to harmonise the universe. An example of the former, to which I would apply the expression of Plutarch—μετ' ᾠδῆς πάσης καὶ μουσικῆς,—with every kind of song and music," may be seen in Tischbein's Collection, Vol I. Plate XXIV. Of the latter, in that of D'Hancarville, Vol. III. Plate LII. where an inscription appears in characters scarcely legible, but which D'Hancarville would explain to be ΟΔΟΥϹ for ΟΔΥϹϹΕΥϹ, Ulysses. The form of the characters, however, is as follows ϽΛΟΔ, which, unless they be read βουστροφηδὸν, give us something like the word *suoda*:—but to wave what cannot be affirmed with certainty, I beg the reader's attention to a painting from a Sicilian vase, in the collection of Wm. Chinnery, Esq. which exhibits a female

representative of the Deity, or Mind, ascending a quadriga, preceded by Camillus, or Mercury, and accompanied by a male and female figure, the former with the hand open and extended in an argumentative attitude, the latter with the arm uplifted and the fingers bent inward, as if persuading or inviting her companion.* These figures I conceive to be the λόγος and πειθὼ, or Argument and Persuasion, which powers are here personated under the different sexes. The vine tendrils issuing from the breast of the female in the car, and from her agent the Dioscurus, are symbolical of the genial influence of Bacchus, who was differently entitled Osiris, Dionysus, and Ampelus, (ἄμπελος) "the vine," which Osiris was supposed to have first planted. The fabled expedition of this personage having been undertaken for the purpose of conferring benefits on mankind, the vine is therefore symbolically made to accompany the Deity in his course.

The cherishing power of the Deity is thus generally expressed on vases by a vine springing from the breast, or from between the shoulders of the great Pan, from which the tendrils, diverging in thin waved and budding shoots, light upon different figures that appear entangled in its folds. This is the meaning of those thin knotted lines which often intersect the illumined paintings on vases of the more ancient class, ornamented with black figures on a red ground. A further example may be seen in Plate XII. of this work.

The painting I first explained made us acquainted with the opinions of the ancients respecting the demiurgic powers, from whom the universe was supposed to have received ani-

* A youth with one hand extended, in the act of exhorting, is designated ΓΕΙΘΩ, in very legible characters, on a Nola vase in the possession of H. Tresham, Esq.

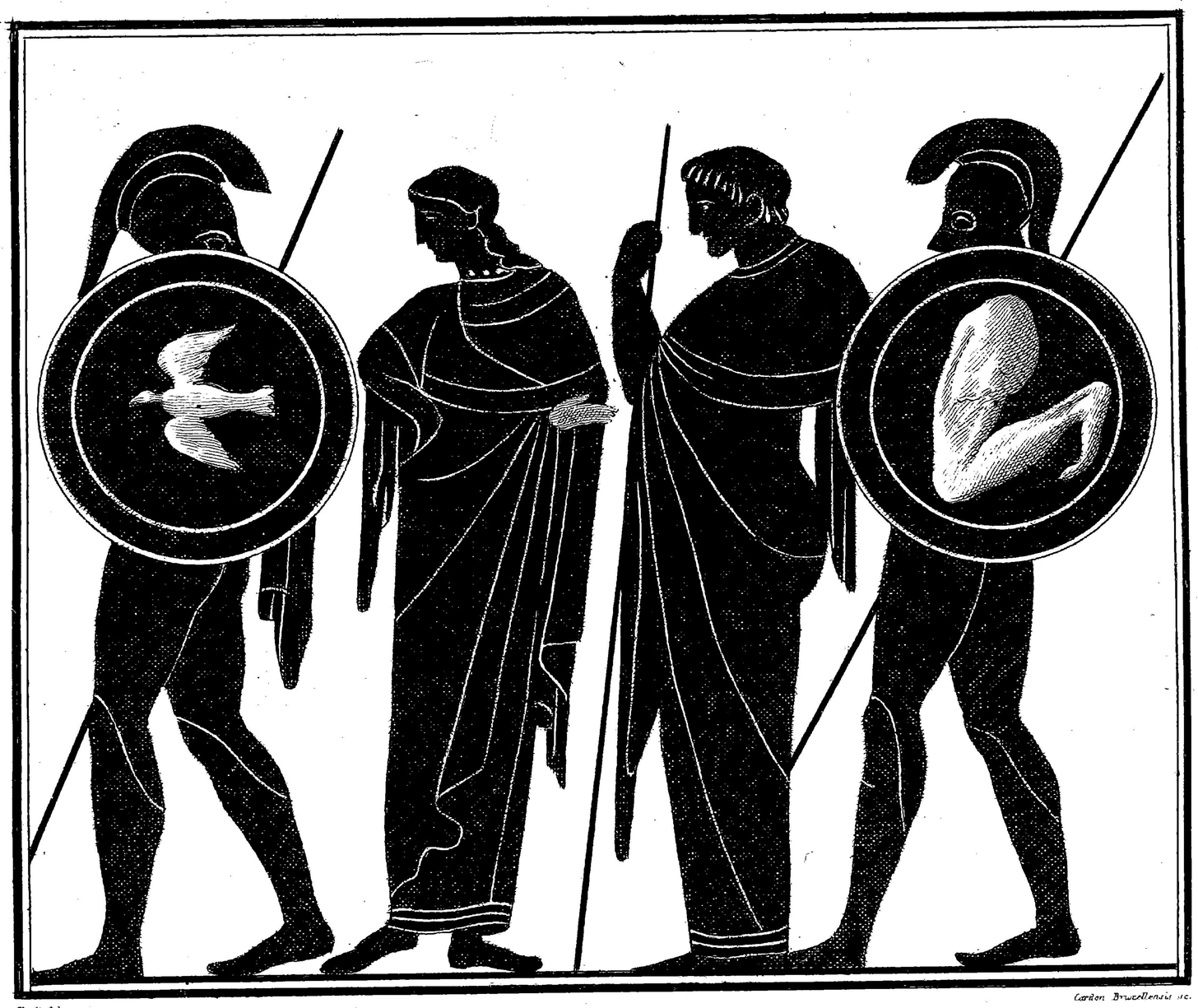
mation, and the sun its light. This second Plate has represented that luminary embodied, and setting out upon his course. We will now consider his influence in the lower world, in which various vicissitudes were accounted for, and were measured by his example.

## PLATE XI.

*Attributes of the Deity, variously personated on Vases.—Of Shields, and their Devices.*

HAVING formerly resolved the mythological Bacchus into his attributes, and shewn in what manner he represented the day and the night sun, accordingly as his visit was paid to either hemisphere; having likewise noticed his ambiguity of sex, whereby he comprehended within himself both the active and passive principles of creation, I will now confirm those illustrations by a different mode of proceeding. I will collect the scattered members of the Osiris, and synthetically shew how groupes were admitted upon vases, which are to be accepted only as parts of one mythic personage. The opposite engraving* represents a male and female figure, both draped, standing between two armed warriors, upon the shield of one of whom is emblazoned a dove, whilst a thigh, leg and foot are bent, and comprised, by way of device, within the shield of the other. These male and female figures are personifications of the double sex of Bacchus, διφυὴς; the two armed attendants are his agents, the Dioscuri. The shield itself is a

* From a very ancient Sicilian vase in the collection of William Chinnery, Esq.



Tondi del.

Cardon Bruxellensis sc.

*Ex cimelijs G. Chauncey Armig. alt. unc. 11.*

symbol of the Deity: his creating power is typified by the dove; the well-known emblem of life, which seeks the upper part of the sphere, and the lower limbs of the human body, having allusion to the lower regions, denote the influence of Bacchus also *in inferis*. Thus the groupe expresses the Bacchus in his several natures, as male and female, vivifier and destroyer:

——— τάδε γὰρ μέλη ἐστὶ τὰ Πανός.*

—"For these are the members of Pan, or the integral deity."—

Thus also upon a very interesting vase, which is engraved in the collection of Passeri,† we notice the preserving and destroying powers of Bacchus emblematically personified. A man, bound hand and foot, is laid obliquely upon a couch, or chair, and his feet are opposed to a blazing fire. A draped figure opposite, looking upward as if with gratitude, stretches out his hands in the act of warming them. Behind, is a temple, within which a figure of the Deity supported upon a pedestal or altar, points toward these figures, as if superintending or directing what passes in the foreground of the painting. The learned antiquary was perplexed with the appearance of torture, thus publickly inflicted, which ill accorded with the celebration of the Bacchanalia, to which he referred the subject of the vase: but the meaning is evident; that the same element which can cherish with its genial warmth, may also be an instrument of torture; that the same Deity who preserves, can also destroy; and that these powers are united in the integral Bacchus.

* Onomacritus Hymn. x. v. 3.

† De Pict. Hetruscor. in Vasculis, Vol. III. last plate.

The attributes of Bacchus are sometimes expressed in a different way. Plate LXXXVI. Vol. II. of the Etruscan Antiquities of D'Hancarville, represents in succession, a tigress and a boar, a lioness and a goat, a harpy and a stag; which are thus alternately classed, as destroying and generating animals: and further to evince this contrast of disposition, allusive to the opposite powers of the Deity, and the continual warfare in nature, of which creation and harmony were the result,* we lastly observe in this painting a pair of fighting bulls, which confirm the explanation given.

The attributes of the Deity are not always so evidently depicted: they are frequently conveyed by detached symbols, and devices upon shields are significantly used for this purpose; such as a human arm to denote the upper, or an anchor the lower hemisphere; the kid, the Hesperian fruit, and wings, expressive of life, and the serpent of renovation; the Pegasus and Salian figures allusive to the pervading power; and others, which do not so readily admit of explanation.

* "(Τῶν πάντων)—ἐκ μάχης καὶ ἀντιπαθείας τὴν γένεσιν ἐχόντων."—Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, sect. xlviii. p. 121.

*Temporary Repose of Nature.—Of the Ægyptian Horus in the torpid State.—Mutes on the Reverse of Vases.—Figures draped and naked. —Errors of Passeri noticed.*

As yet, however, we have made but little advancement towards a general understanding of the paintings upon vases: it is time that we examine the operation of the attributes lately mentioned, and how by their influence Nature was subjected to the vicissitude of decay, inertion, and resuscitation. The most frequent allusion of these scenes is the temporary suspension of the powers of nature, and the restoration of the same by the interference of some vivifying agent. By far the most numerous class of paintings upon Etruscan vases have been so designed, as to elucidate this subject in one composition; and although a satisfactory explanation of every vase is more than we can promise, yet the reader may be assured, that with moderate attention to the meaning of symbols, and the manner in which they are interchanged in order to produce varieties, many of these subjects may be understood by referring them to this general allegory.

The temporary state of rest may be exemplified in a pleasing instance furnished by Passeri, the genuine meaning of which, however, escaped that learned antiquary. He has cited a vase whereon was depicted a soldier sleeping on his post, but with his limbs so disposed, as that upon the least alarm, he might start up and resume his station in the ranks. I will give it in his own words:

" In eâ miles clypeo protectus, sinistro genu et crure humi dejecto, super illud decumbit ; at ne proruat, hinc genu dextero sublato, et clypeo subnixus ita dormit, ut, signo dato, promptissimè exsiliat."*—The solution of this allegory is ready at our hand ; it represents the temporary repose of nature after lassitude or decay, and its promptitude to resume its functions. The same explanation may also be applied to a vignette which embellishes an early part of Mr. Tischbein's Illustrations of Homer ; where a file of warriors kneel, their helmets, pikes, and greaves only appearing beyond the orbs of their shields. The fact is, they *rest* upon their arms, but are nevertheless ready to spring up from their temporary state of repose.

The explanation of these later devices will, perhaps, be readily admitted ; but it may be satisfactory to many to be informed, whence the Greeks derived them, and what was their original meaning. To display this, I must have recourse to the same country to which I referred the origin of the vase. The doctrine of the inert state may be supposed to have been more recently borrowed from a very simple agricultural painting of the Ægyptians, whereby they emblematically warned their countrymen of those times of annual rest, when the overflowing of the Nile caused a cessation of agricultural labours, until, upon the entrance of the sun into a certain sign, the waters subsided, and vegetation sprang forth with renewed vigour.† An etching in the work of the Abbé Pluches *(Pl. XI. Tom. I. p.* 88.) to which I refer the reader, will make this more evident. Horus, an emblem of vegetable nature, there appears in a state of repose, stretched on a couch or bier, and embarrassed

* Passeri, Vol. I. p. LXXI.

† This may suffice for the present, but the allegory was of more ancient origin.

with swaddling clothes, to denote his inaction under the influence of the sun in Leo; whilst a female before him (probably Virgo), with the hand uplifted, calls him into action. The gem, given as a vignette to the Preface of this work, may be also resorted to, and compared with a Plate in Kæmpfer's History of Japan, *Tom. I. Plate V. p.* 33. which represents Amida seated on a cippus, with five small figures above, and the same number of figures beneath him. In these several plates, the Ægytian Horus, the Grecian Bacchus, and the Indian Buddha appear in a similar state of rest, and, which may be deemed still more curious, the Canopi below the Horus, the five vases, and the five attendants above and below the Greek and Indian deities, correspondently denote the elements* or attributes of

* This observation requires further comment. I have already noticed, that the element water was characteristic of the preserver Bacchus, who was accordingly symbolised, and his mysteries were commemorated, by the vase. In the Ægyptian painting, indeed, the symbols are somewhat perverted. Three vessels denoted separately the elements, earth, water, air, and collectively the overflowing of the Nile, as I am instructed by Horapollo, (*p.* 38, *ed. Pauw*,) who assigns a physical reason for this signification. But the Ægyptian painting, having also to notice time, and other circumstances, heads of certain creatures, are superadded to the vessels, the complex meaning of which may be learnt from the Abbé Pluches: and a fourth vessel is introduced, surmounted by the head of a Virgin, with allusion to that particular sign. That the twice five figures attendant upon Amida represent the elements, I conclude, 1. from the number of them as computed by the Japanese, viz. 1. wood; 2. fire; 3. earth; 4. ore; 5. water; which elements, with a different monosyllable postfixed, are increased to ten, (*Kæmpfer*, *p.* 157): 2. from Kæmpfer having noticed (*p.* 604) an idol in the Temple of Sotoktais, surrounded with the idols of four elements. In proof that these relate to the attributes of their deity, may be adduced the opinions of the Japanese philosophers, who somewhat after the manner of the Brahmins, (*Asiat. Researches*, *Vol. I. p.* 244, *octavo*,) maintain that the animal creation was produced by *In-Jo*, i. e. Heaven, and five terrestrial elements, (*Kæmpfer*, *p.* 250). Respecting the connection between Buddha and the great events of the creation and the deluge, much might be here adduced, did not that subject present too extensive a field for enquiry. I will content myself with suggesting, that the representatives of the Deity, *Cenresi* in Tibet, and *Rávana* in Ceylon,

each personage: and these monuments illustrate well the character of Buddha, "*in otio plurimo* (to use the words of Tertullian) *placidæ stupentis Divinitatis.*" But we will transfer the scene from Ægypt to Eleusis. If the reader will open the work of Passeri, *(Vol. III. Plate CCXCVIII.)* he will observe the same subject expressed upon a very curious vase of the earlier class, which may possibly be yet preserved in the Vatican. The inert Bacchus is there exposed upon a funeral couch, and the vivifying agent, like the Ægyptian Virgo, awakens him into energy from the torpid state. On the reverse of the same vase *(ibid. Plate CCXCIX.)* nature seems to be represented under the form of a dragon, which an owl draws up by a string from the shades.

The appropriate symbols of the inert state, therefore, appear to be sleep, rest, the attitude of reclining,* and particularly the embarrassment of cloathing. Under this last head may be classed reverses exhibiting draped figures, which Passeri has termed, youths newly invested with the *toga virilis*. I had long doubted the propriety of this assertion of Passeri applied to vases of Greek workmanship. But I yield to the judicious observations of Mr. Böttiger, who has properly savoured that opinion: † I must, however, be permitted to add this corollary:

are exhibited, the one with a human head and ten others, *Alph. Tibet. p.* 166. the other with the head of the ass and ten human heads, *Systema Brachman. p.* 299. probably with allusion to the creating Deity operating upon the twice five elements.

* To these may be added bondage, whether expressed by the hands tied behind the back of the figure, as in those instances, on gems, of Cupid and Psyche, bound, *Mus. Florentin. Vol. I. Plate LXXIX. fig.* 4, 5, 6; or by Time, in fetters, *Ibid. Vol. I. Plate XCVII. fig.* 4; or, Cupid in the stocks, *Ibid, Vol. I. Plate LXXXI. fig.* 2, 3, 4; besides many others.

† Mr. Böttiger cites an interesting passage in Artemidorus, where allusion is made to the one year's inaction and silence of youths with the right hand enveloped in their

—That the representation of youths so invested, with their hands beneath the *chlamys*, and hence unentitled to a voice in public assemblies, must be symbolically accepted as merely denoting silence with respect to the mysteries. In the same manner, on the bottom of the Barberini Vase, a figure draped and hooded, with the finger to the mouth, implies, that the mysterious allegories represented on the side of that vessel are not to be incautiously revealed.*

It may therefore be observed, with regard to figures draped and naked, that the former are generally to be considered in the inert, the latter in the resuscitated state; and many instances may be produced where figures have been thus purposely contrasted. Such a one occurs in the work of Passeri, *(Vol. III. Plate CCXLVI.)* where two naked dancing figures in front, are contrasted with two draped figures on the reverse of the same vase, *Plate CCXLVII.* But a more striking instance may be

robes, *Oneirocrit: Lib. I. cap. lvi. p.* 48. *ed. Rigaltii*, whence he remarks,—1. That the investing of youths with the chlamys at the age of 17 was an ancient Athenian custom, and transferred to the Grecian colonies. He supposes that the Etruscans and their Roman descendants imitated this ancient ceremony in their custom of presenting the toga. 2. That the upper garments of the figures so represented on reverses neither resemble the Grecian *chlamys* nor the Roman *toga*. They appear to him to be of a mixed fashion, and he would determine them to be the *toga Græcanica* of Suetonius in Domitian, c. 4.; "and wherefore," he adds, "might not the scanty upper cloak as worn in the mother country, have taken a broader cast when used by the same Greeks in Lower Italy, and have been thus accommodated to the effeminate manners of that voluptuous people?"

*Über den Raub der Cassandra auf einem alten Gefässe von gebrannter erde.—Zwey abhandlungen von H. Meyer, und C. A. Böttiger.—Weimar*, 1794. 4*to. p.* 83, 84.

* A very curious Campana vase, now in the possession of the Earl of Aberdeen, confirms what I have here suggested. Upon the reverse of this, supported by two such draped and muffled figures, is to be seen Harpocrates on the lotus, and a water-fowl beneath him. This painting is decisive. The youths are *mute* as to the meaning of the allegories depicted on the front of the vase.

noticed on a vase, Plate XCIV. in the 3d Vol. of D'Hancarville's Collection. The painting of this, as far as it concerns Pan and Celmis, I have already explained: the remaining part also deserves notice. A naked male there approaches a tree, the trunk of which is embraced by two serpents, in the same way as the mundane egg is embraced by the Agathodæmon. The three Hesperian apples hang above, and the naked male figure appears to be kept at bay by one of the serpents which guard them. A *draped* female advances upon the other side, but upon that no fruit is to be seen. Thus fruitfulness and sterility, and the draped and the unembarrassed states appear to be purposely contrasted. To the right are Pan, with the globe, and Celmis. I confess that I formerly found a difficulty in believing, with Passeri, that many Chaldean traditions had found their way among his Tuscan ancestors; but the more I view this plate, the more I am led to think, that an obscure notion of the objects of these traditions had been preserved in the Mysteries: nor can I refrain from adducing those memorable words in *Gen. ch. iii. ver.* 11.—"Who told thee that thou wast *naked*?—hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

It is an unpleasant task to correct the errors of those who have gone before us in any particular enquiry; nevertheless, to notice those errors may prevent others who follow, from wandering. The mode of solution which I propose on all occasions, in place of the unsatisfactory reference hitherto made, to poetic mythology and history, will, at least, rescue the credit of the artists who executed these paintings, from the charge of anachronism, and of disregarding unity of place in the scenes they depicted. Much should be conceded to Passeri, who engaged

in these discussions at a very early period, relying solely upon his own ingenuity to unravel the intricacies of a subject, which even in the present day is exceedingly obscure; and freely acknowledging his mistakes, with the hope that others might profit by them. It is with every respect, therefore, for the merit of this learned Antiquary, that I offer a remedy for the apparent incongruity in his explanation of such a vase as the following. I allude to *Plate XIII. Vol. I.* where he has felt a difficulty to reconcile the appearance of Clytemnestra with Iphigenia, and a female attendant at Sparta, whilst divided from them only by a pillar, were seen Achilles demanding the daughter of the king in marriage, and Ulysses interfering, which last events must have taken place at Aulis. The difficulty seems to have arisen from a wrong interpretation of the umbrella borne by the Iphigenia, which I have elsewhere given reason to believe, (upon vases at least), does not denote marriage.* The truth is, that in this painting the three females form a groupe *in inferis*, which is implied by the umbrella spread over them; they are draped, as being inert, and their inactivity is further implied, by two of them being seated, and the third in a quiescent (though upright) posture: the fancied Clytemnestra is indeed in the act of listening with appearance of expectation; equally with her companions she is motionless; but they are *in inferis*, where, like the dæmon in his glass prison, they sit enchanted, waiting until some more powerful magician shall come to their assistance, and break the charm.

* When the bride walked beneath the umbrella, it was to denote a transition from the shades to light, from barrenness to fœcundity; and for the same reason the bride was covered with the hood or veil, as in the celebrated gem which represents the marriage of Cupid and Psyche.

The pillar, beneath which they are seated, is the boundary between motion and rest, between life and death: the small figure upon the summit is not the Tauric Diana, but the emblematical Bacchus, whose powers are for awhile suspended. The hooded Elder *resting* on his staff, and the supposed Achilles *leaning* on his spear, are engaged in conversation: the gross appearance of the latter is ill suited to the youthful and fiery character of the Grecian hero; and I conceive, they are both designed to complete the view of that intermediate state, to which all ranks, the virgin and the matron, the warrior and the sage, were supposed to be equally obnoxious. Their expectation of being recalled is however indicated, by the fingers of the warrior bent backward, and on the reverse of the vase, the animating powers advance to release them, with the torch, the tibiæ, and the tamborine, to the sound of which instruments, perhaps, the Clytemnestra listens, being thereby apprized of their coming.

*Brief Explanation of Symbols mentioned by Clemens Alexandrinus.*

As many detached symbols appear on vases, which form but supplementary parts in the illumined paintings, we may here take a hasty glance at them: of these the Τολύπη, a ball of wool, mentioned by Clemens, is discovered as a crossed ball in the hand of females, and it probably implies the thread of life which is not yet spun. The presentation of a *Gutta* may denote the principle of fecundity comprised in the oil vessel, and this may account to us why sesame is recorded as a mysterious seed, from the oil which it produces; oil being accepted as a principle of fertility.

The present may also be a favourable opportunity for discussing those symbols mentioned by the same venerable Father. "Sesame, pyramids, the ball of wool, the knobbed cake, pile of salt, the serpent, pomegranate, hearts, fennel, ivy, cheese and corncake and poppy" Ταῦτ' ἔστιν αὐτῶν τὰ ἅγια. The pyramidal cake, from its shape, was a similar emblem with flame and the Phallus. The knob or boss, which partakes somewhat of the pyramidal form, has a similar import. It appears particularly in the center of ancient *pateræ*, of which many, in bronze, are preserved in the cabinets of the curious. It there rises out of the lotus, expressive of the action of flame upon water: these *pateræ* are therefore surrounded by a rim, in order to contain water, that the boss in the center might appear surrounded by this element. Salt was presented in the mysteries, as symbolical of generation.* The serpent is a well

* "Ἐν ταῖς τελεταῖς ταύτης .... τεκμήριον τῆς γονῆς, ἁλῶν χόνδρος, καὶ φαλλὸς τοῖς μυουμένοις .... ἐπιδίδοται." Clem. Alex. protrept. p. 13, Ed. Potter.

known emblem. The pomegranate was used as a vivifying gift, because its contents were supposed to represent the seeds of existence. *Καρδίαι*, or hearts, I believe to have been nothing more than leaves in that shape ; for I find upon a Vase published by Passeri, a figure bearing a Thyrsus, tipt with the pine cone, which is composed of heart-shaped leaves, some of which fall from it, as if to indicate the genial influence of the pine cone shed upon the objects below. Upon a gem of Dioscorides, published by Bracci,* may be seen an Hermaphrodite reclining beneath a tree *in Inferis*, and certain infant winged genii, one of whom approaches with a heart-shaped leaf, as if to wake him from his state of inertion, whilst the others play on the lyre and the reed pipe. This leaf is therefore the substitute for flame, and a vivifying symbol. Fennel, a species of the Anethum or Dill-plant, is one of that class termed annual, and its use upon the couch of Adonis is evident. Ivy always denotes the shades, and is proper to Bacchus *in Inferis ;* it had, therefore, a place in the Agrionia and Nyctelia, which were night-festivals, as we are informed by Plutarch.† It appears on a small vase of marble in the collection of Henry Blundell, Esq. curiously contrasted with the vine. The front of this oval vase is incrusted with the latter, and the other half of it with the ivy ; and since the vase is, generally speaking, the larva of Bacchus, so in this instance we view him in his double capacity, designated by appropriate symbols, as the day and the night sun. The cheese and corn-cake, noticed by Clemens,

* Memorie degli antichi Incisori, Vol. II. plate LXVIII.

† "Καὶ ἅτε ἐν Ἥρας Ἀθήνησιν, ἅτε Θήβησιν ἐν Ἀφροδίτης, ἴδοι τις ἂν κιττόν. Ἀγριωνίοισδε (as the passage is judiciously restored by Meursius, *Græc. feriata p.* 3,) καὶ Νυκτελίοις, ὧν τὰ πολλὰ διὰ σκότος δρᾶται, πάρεσιν." *Plutarch. Rom. Quæst.* p. 519. Ed. Steph.

among the mystic symbols, may possibly have been of the same nature with that which is known in this country by the name of *firmity*, in which the grain is preserved entire, for whatever contained seeds, was deemed by the ancients, symbolical of life and generation. The poppy, the last upon the list I have quoted, had its use in the mysteries for the same reason. The somniferous qualities of this plant enforced the idea of quiescence, but the seeds of existence which it was emblematically supposed to contain,* seemed to shew, that Nature, though her powers were suspended, yet possessed the capability of being called into existence.

Before I conclude, it may not be amiss to enumerate the implements for promoting youthful exercise, such as the cone and whipping-top alluded to by Clemens, "*Κῶνος, καὶ ῥόμβος καὶ παίγνια καμπεσίγνια*," and others which he has noticed in these words, "It may also be of use to make known those worthless symbols of your mysteries, the Astragalus, the sphere, the whirligig, apples, the whipping-top, the mirror, and the fleece." *Page* 15, *Ed. Potter.*

It were fatiguing the patience of the reader to discuss these trifles at length, nor do I feel confident that I could explain them to my entire satisfaction. The dissimilar casts of the Astragali might, however, express the alternate operations of the Dioscuri;† the sphere, the whirligig, might denote a

* "Erant enim (papavera) ab prodigiosam seminum copiam symbolum fæcunditatis auctore Porphyrio apud Euseb. de Præp. Evang. III. 2. ex quo factum est, ut Cereri tribuerentur." Passeri de Pict. Hetr. in Vasc. Vol. I. p. 72.

† Priapeïd figures in diminutive bronze, punctured with the numbers of the casts, so as to answer the purpose of Astragali, have been found in tombs, and two such are preserved in the Townley Collection. Hence, perhaps, the allusion of Æschylus to

revolution ;* the mirror might present the *simulachrum animæ*, for which Servius may be consulted upon those words in the Æneid. *lib.* 4. *v.* 654, "*sub terras ibit Imago ;*" † the fleece might be subjected to the same explanation with the Τολύπη, or ball of wool ; nor might it be deemed too wild a conjecture, were I to suggest that, the golden apples which were gathered amongst the vocal Hesperides,

"*Μῆλά τε χρύσεα καλὰ, παρ' Ἑσπερίδων λιγυφώνων,*"

were to be sought, not according to the learned Gesner, among the orange groves of Portugal, but in the interior of Asia, from which, perhaps, they were imported with those *Chaldæa miracula*, which were admitted into the theology of the Greeks, as, I believe, is somewhere hinted by Martianus Capella : Certain it is, that on more than one vase published in the Collections of Passeri and D'Hancarville, appears a serpent entwined round a tree loaded with such fruit, and the apple is accordingly a vivifying symbol.

the dice of Jupiter. See also my remarks upon the word κυβιστητὴρ, a tumbler, p. 31. of which there were two admitted in the Cretan Dance, a singular coincidence, should it be supposed that that dance were of sacred institution.

* The intelligent narrator of his embassy to Thibet, pleasantly informs us, upon a certain occasion, that he slept amongst Gods and whirligigs.

† See the story of Narcissus thus applied in an ancient fresco painting. *Antichità d'Ercolano, Pitture. Tom. V. Plate XXVIII*; *also Plates XXX, XXXI.*

## *Of Fish, and the Allegory of Angling.*

Before I proceed to the examination of new matter, for I have other subtleties to propose, and I shall be obliged to adopt a particular jargon in expounding the sophisticated ideas which were embodied and expressed on vases, I will adduce something further on the subject of resuscitation; for this purpose, I select a vase in the Collection of D'Hancarville, *Vol. II. Plate XXVII.* Upon this appear the Dioscuri, who, having landed the female Bacchus *in inferis*, are in the act of heaving their anchor, and rowing back to the opposite shore of the Styx. The *Libera* seated on the bank in the mystic attitude of the Harpocrates, awaits the return of the Genius who may be charged with calling her into activity. This already appears in the upper part of the painting, where a water-fowl is on the wing towards her, bearing in its mouth a fish, which, in this instance, is evidently used for a symbol of resuscitation.

In the Museum Florentinum* is a gem, which exhibits a fisherman in a boat, angling; beneath the water, as if *in inferis*, with one foot supported, is a naked figure, bearing a trident and a dolphin; before him on the ground is a *præfericulum*, behind him an anchor.† Now we are instructed by the vase before mentioned, that the dolphin uplifted is a vivifying symbol, and the boatman, who floats on the waters, must be

* Mus. Florentin. Vol. II. Plate XLIX. fig. 1.

† The anchor, which is let down to the bottom of the sea, I apprehend denotes the *Inferi*, and it has this signification, expressed as a device on the shield of a Dioscurus on a vase in the Collection engraved by Tishbein. Vol. I. Pl. XXIX.

considered in the inert state, in order to benefit from it. Angling for fish, therefore, became an appropriate allegory for any monumental stone, and upon one of this class in the Townley Collection, a fisherman, *seated* upon a rock, angles for fish, which denote the principle of animation required by inert nature: and in the Collection of Henry Blundell, Esq. at Ince, near Liverpool, a figure of an angler (in small life) seated on a rock, with a basket of fish by his side, illustrates the same idea.

The reader, prepared by the foregoing observations, will probably feel himself at no loss if I introduce him to a fishing party composed of distinguished ancient personages, for an acquaintance with which I am indebted to the condescension of Thomas Hope, Esq. who has politely permitted an engraving to be taken from a Sicilian Vase in his splendid Collection, whereon this subject is preserved. The triad of grisly figures exhibited in the accompanying Plate, consists of Hercules, distinguishable by the lion's skin and quiver, kneeling on a rock in the center, Neptune angling on a rock behind him, and Hermes seated to the right, reaching forward the caduceus. The anxiety and attention of Hercules is well expressed by his attitude, and by the hand inverted, as if this deity were watching the expected bite. The sovereign of the waters behind him, grasps a fish that he has just hooked, and Hermes, who could either consign to the deep, or resuscitate with equal facility by means of his caduceus, needs no better implement on the present occasion. Thus, each pursues the sport with equal prospect of success. But who would expect, from a subject so grotesquely detailed, that the painter had designed to express the triple power of the deity, drawing the principle



Tendi. del:

Ant: Cardon fc:

Ex celeberrimo Musco Th: Hope Armig:

of life from the primary abyss? Such, however, I presume to be the sophisticated meaning of this painting: for, the vine springing from the feet of Hercules, identifies him with the creating Bacchus, who has assumed the lion's skin and quiver, as emblematical of power. The preserver is designated by Neptune, who presided over the waters, and he is here opposed to the destroyer and Regenerator Hermes. In confirmation of this exposition, let me observe, that winged genii denote the animating principle; and such is their meaning when Psyche angles for winged infants instead of fish, on a gem published by Bracci.*

The original cause for the acceptation of fish in this sense it were difficult to ascertain: probably it arose from the ready and excessive degree in which their species is propagated, but I have met with a curious reason assigned for it in Plutarch, which I will venture to adduce. The priests of Neptune at Megara, as the Syrians also, it seems, abstained from fish, because they were the symbol of humid nature, from which all things were created. But the opinion of Anaximander is truly whimsical; "for he attempts to prove, (says Plutarch,† or Nestor for him), not that fish and men are in their natures the same, but that men were originally generated *in* fish, and being bred up (as was the case with the first men) until such time as they were equal to providing for themselves, they were then cast out, and they caught hold of dry land." Those who do not fully assent to the system of Mr. Bryant, will scarcely permit

* Bracci, Vol. I. Tab. XIX. No. 1.

† Ἀναξίμανδρος τῶν ἀνθρώπων πατέρα καὶ μητέρα κοινὸν ἀποφήνας τὸν ἰχθύν. Plutarch Συμποσ. προβλ: lib. viii. prob. 8. Διὰ τί μάλιστα οἱ Πυθαγορικοὶ ἐμψύχων τοὺς ἰχθῦς παρητοῦντο.

me to refer this tradition to the Deluge ;* but the Indian Vishnu, the Preserver, is fabled to have interfered in the form of a fish during the destruction of the world by water. Those Gentile divinities, which are reported to have been personated by figures ending in the form of a fish, were consequently representations of the Deity, in his generating or preserving capacity, and we may plainly discover, that it was not merely from the exposition of the initial letters comprised in the word *ΙΧΘΥΣ*,† that the title of the Fish was given to *Christ*, as the Saviour or Preserver, by the early converts to his Church, but it arose from a laudable zeal in his followers to reclaim the Pagans from their absurd worship, by speaking to them in a symbolical and sacred language, which they readily understood.

* See many ingenious arguments respecting the Ceto indifferently considered as a fish or boat. *Analysis of Ancient Mythology.*

† " Ἰησοῦς, Χριστὸς, Θεοῦ Υἱὸς, Σωτήρ."

## *Of Old Age, Wine, Music and Rhetoric.*

I will dismiss the subject of Angling, by referring to some pleasing lines upon a worn out sportsman, who hung up his fishing rods and lines, and other implements of the chase, to Hermes: by the concluding line of the epigram,*

——— "ἐκ γήρως δ' ἀδρανίῃ δέδεται,"

I am reminded, that in the Greek religious allegories, old age implies a state of bondage and inertion. To figures of this class, wine is frequently presented as the invigorating principle. This appears in the *Antichità d'Ercolano*, *Pitture*, Vol. V. plate XLV, wherein are depicted, a Silenus seated beneath a leafless tree, and a female pouring wine to him from an uter. Upon an ancient terracotta, in the Townley Collection, may be seen two Dioscuri, hooded, as agents *in Inferis*, who resting on one knee, their backs turned to each other, and one hand uplifted, pour wine into a *tazza*, and present it severally to a couchant griffin. In that well known bass relief, of which we have a very spirited etching, the last in the work of Bartoli upon ancient sepulchres, Ganymede offers wine (for such seems really to have been that liquor which poets ennobled by the name of nectar,) to the eagle, overshadowed by a tree. The avidity of the bird, and his longing after immortality, are well described by his depressing the cup with his talon, as if to procure a readier draught of the liquor: with this he waits to be refreshed, before he wings his flight to the upper hemi-

* It is given by Toup on Suidas, Vol. I. p. 19.

sphere. That such allegories are conformable to the religious notions of the Greeks, we learn from Pausanias, who informs us that the Dorians named Bacchus Psilas, a word implying, in their language, wings, and with great propriety, he adds, in his opinion, for wine elevates and lightens the spirits of man, in the same way as wings uplift a bird: "*Θεῶν δὲ σέβουσιν οἱ ταύτῃ τόν τε Ἀμυκλαῖον καὶ Διόνυσον, ὀρθότατα ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν Ψίλαν ἐπονομάζοντες· ψίλα γὰρ καλοῦσιν οἱ Δωριεῖς τὰ πτερά. ἀνθρώπους δὲ οἶνος ἐπαίρει τε καὶ ἀνακουφίζει γνώμην, οὐδέν τι ἧσσον ἢ ὄρνιθας πτερά.*" Pausan. Lacon. Lib. III. p. 258.—The Bacchus of the Poets, young and sprightly, is never represented by them indulging in wine to intoxication. In those beautiful lines of Nonnus, which might furnish subject either for the chissel or the pencil, he is appropriately described sipping the genial liquor:

"*Καὶ γλυκερὸν πόλον εὗρε. καὶ οἰνοχύτου Διονύσου*
*Λευκὰ διαινομένων ἐρυθαίνετο δάκτυλα χειρῶν.*
*Καὶ δέπας ἀγκύλον εἶχε βοὸς κέρας· ἡδυπότου δὲ*
*Χείλεσιν ἀκροτάτοισιν ἐγεύσατο βάκχος ἑέρσης.*"

*Lib. XII. v.* 201.

Bacchus the Vine's sweet bev'rage foremost found,
Its foaming juice his purpled fingers crown'd,
Forth from the cup's writhed horn the drops he drew,
Bent o'er the brim, and lightly sipp'd the dew.*

The reason for wine being sacred to Bacchus, as corn and tillage were favoured by Ceres, arose from the emblematical allusion of them to resuscitation.

When, therefore, we observe the Grecian Bacchus mixing sober reflection in his cups, we need not be surprised, if in other amusements we find him equally intellectual and serious.

* This version is from the elegant pen of William Sotheby, Esq.

The comic muse placed under his protection, loses a part of her gaiety; and although she steps forward with an air of mirth, she nevertheless bears the destructive *pedum* and funeral *larva*, from which emblems we collect the proper use of the ancient drama, and the serious moral by which this refined species of poetry was distinguished from the gross productions of the ancient mimes.

Music and musical instruments are frequently applied on ancient monuments, with a similar allusion. The trumpet used in this sense, in a plate in D'Hancarville's Collection, would be worth the reader's notice; but he will turn from it with disgust, when he finds it accompanied by an indecent emblem that is further illustrative of the meaning I assign to it. The lyre and *tibiæ* are less offensively introduced on vases, and likewise on gems; and in the work of Caylus, especially, may be noticed the three Cabirs on the deck of a boat, which may be supposed to float on the great abyss, while Camillus excites them to dance by blowing the *tibiæ*.

In subjects more intellectually conceived, rhetoric has furnished many elegant groups; upon an ancient fresco may be seen an elder seated, with a cista of volumes at his feet, and a female addressing him, with the hand extended in a persuasive attitude. I venture to deem the former philosophy, in the latter I recognise eloquence; for it may be suggested, that philosophy when inert, is little more than meditation, but animated by eloquence, it assumes a different nature, it benefits and enlightens; and it is from this union of soul with body, that we derive the noble productions of historic composition.

In this class, therefore, I will place a vase already noticed,

where a youth in the act of pleading is entitled *ΠΕΙΘΩ*, and a seated female *ΕΥΚΛΕΑ*, as a personification of eloquence rousing the historic Muse. It is to be regretted that an imperfection in the vase, prevents our ascertaining the character of a third figure, that would have rendered the group complete; but the allegory is sufficiently intelligible.

*Plate XIII. p: 76*






*alt unc: 7.*

## *Of the Dotted Chaplet, Girdle and Scarf—the Fate of Cassandra, and Flight of Æneas mystically treated.*

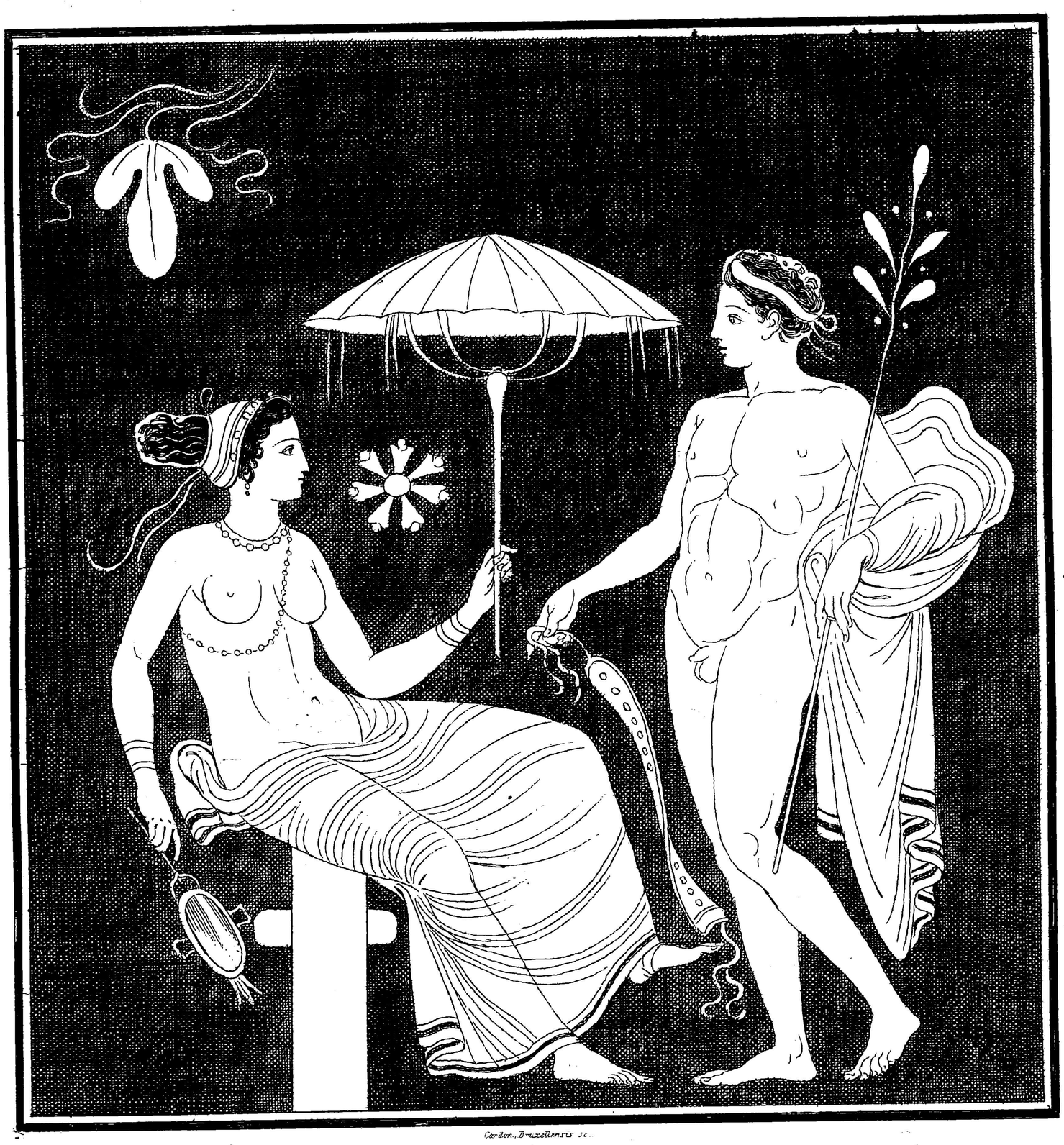
It was just at this moment that I had promised to myself and the *Mystæ* my readers, admission to the very *adyta* of Eleusis; for I had found a key, not indeed that golden one which Sophocles tells us was hung upon the tongue of the Eleusinian priests, it was of baser metal; with the hope of obtaining useful information I applied it: but what a nauseous spectacle did it disclose!

To see the internal organization of nature laid open, to view the mysterious œconomy of her womb, (and this merely to shew the transition from sterility to fœcundity, and to prove that nature is ever reproductive,) might afford entertainment to the anatomist, or the obstetrical professor; but to an enquirer into the principles of Greek theology, it presented nothing but horror and disgust. Let me then quickly close this chamber, where, from every object drips uncleanness, and chase its contents from my memory. It is now, for the first time, that I applaud the prudence of those who forbad the disclosure of the mysteries. The Greek writers often intimate their acquaintance with these doctrines, which visions and other warnings deterred them from exposing; but, independent of their fears, and the punishment that awaited whoever revealed them, these writers might also have convicted themselves of unmanly conduct, in having listened to such discourses, and I conceive, notwithstanding the laxity of morals in Greece, that the

priests who adopted these gross allusions in explaining their tenets, would scarcely have been honoured with general respect, but for the consolatory promises also held out by them to the initiated.

The extent of these disquisitions will be somewhat abridged, from the disappointment I have experienced: of some things which it yet remains for me to treat, a part must be taken by my reader for granted; but should he be inclined to withhold his assent to certain points, I will rather court his incredulity, than be compelled to assign authority for what I advance. To enter upon an investigation, merely because the object to be discussed is in itself curious, were a waste of time; nor was such my motive for undertaking this work; but to collect from any such enquiry, what may throw light upon the customs and ceremonies of distant nations, or tend to approximate the scattered tribes of the μερόπων ἀνθρώπων towards their original *focus*, may have its use, as well as rational entertainment. It is with this view, therefore, that I proceed in my disquisition.

The object of these nightly shews, was chiefly to display nature resuscitated, generally by the means of some vivifying gift; but this present was supposed to be first impregnated, in a manner which, for obvious reasons, I forbear to explain. Suffice it to say, that certain luminous spots, whether disposed in a circle, or expressed upon a leaf or chaplet, a girdle or scarf, were signs of such impregnation. Hence I have reason for dissenting from the report of Diodorus Siculus, respecting the νεβρὶς, or fawn's hide, which that writer observes was said to be worn by Bacchus, because it represented the starry firmament, whereas, the spotted appearance of it recommended this peculiar clothing to Bacchus for the reason I have stated;



*Cardon., Bruxellensis sc..*

*In Musco Britannico.*

it was a symbol of fœcundity: It was therefore, that during the Lupercalia at Rome, women voluntarily submitted to blows, inflicted by those who ran about the streets with thongs of goat's hide: from the nature of that animal, the blow was thought to promise fruitfulness and easy delivery:

" Nupta, quid expectas? non tu pollentibus herbis,
Nec prece, nec magico carmine mater eris.
Excipe fœcundæ patienter verbera dextræ:
Jam socer optati nomen habebit avi."

*Ovid Fast. Lib. II.* 425.

This is the meaning of the dotted leaf which appears upon vases; and when the spotted crown or girdle (whether tied or untied) was presented to a seated female, it denoted the re-admission of inert nature into the circle of existence. This may be seen upon a vase in D'Hancarville, *Vol. II. Plate LI.* where the female is seated upon a terminus, beneath the shade of an umbrella: with her left hand she inverts a *speculum*, referring, as I before observed, to the *εἶδος* or *simulachrum animæ* at that moment in the lower regions, whilst the vivifying Dioscurus presents the dotted untied girdle. This one example will furnish a solution for numerous others that might be adduced.

But I am here presented with an opportunity of turning to a more pleasing subject, and at the same time of doing justice to a very well judged assertion of the Missionary Paolino, which I have before commended.

In the very entertaining narrative of Capt. Turner's Embassy to Thibet, we are informed that,* " between people of every

* Page 233. The passage is so interesting, that I trust I shall be pardoned for quoting it at length.

rank and station in life, the presenting a silk scarf, constantly forms an essential part of the ceremonial of salutation. If persons of equal rank meet, an exchange takes place: if a superior is approached, he holds out his hand to receive the scarf, and a similar one is thrown across the shoulders of the inferior by the hand of an attendant, at the moment of his dismission." "They are commonly damasked, and the sacred words, *oom maunee paimee oom*,* are usually interwoven near both ends;" and again, "trivial and unmeaning as this custom may appear to Europeans, long and general practice has here attached to it the highest importance. I could obtain no determinate information as to its meaning or origin, but I find that it has indeed a most extensive prevalence. It is observed, as I have before noticed, in all the territory of the Daeb Raja; it obtains throughout Thibet; it extends from Turkestan to the confines of the great Desert; it is practised

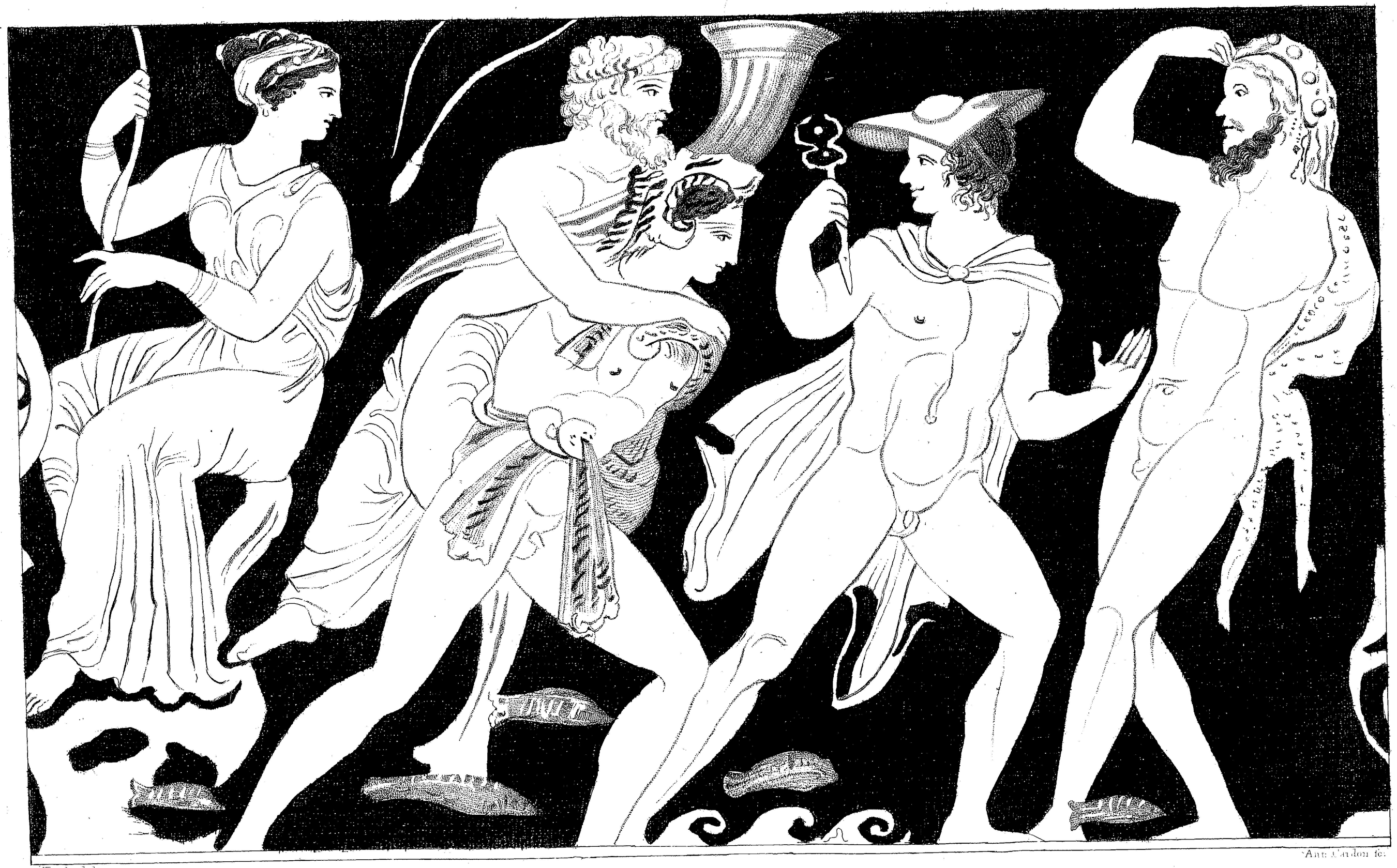
* *Hom-manì-peme-hum*, in Alphabet. Tibetan:—These words I would render: "*fiat, Manes loto (insidens), fiat*"—Mani, of whom and of his parents, Patecius and Carossa, we have a very imperfect account in the work of Father Giorgi, I apprehend to have been *originally* the same with the Indian Menu, the Ægyptian Menes, and our patriarch Noah: since, in the East, the same personages are revived at different periods, agreeable with the scheme of the metempsychosis. This, the Buddhists of Thibet believe to be carried on by means of the lunar ship, which ferries over the souls of the approved to the pure Regions. Alph. Tib. p. 238, 372. Hence we may infer, that the deluge, and the subsequent renewal of the human race, were accepted by early nations, as a type and assurance of a future state. The persons of Mani and Pout or Buddha are essentially different. The former is decidedly the patriarch Noah. An original and happy conjecture of Sir Wm. C. Rouse Boughton, Bart. seems to have ascertained the person of the latter. This respectable Oriental scholar would identify Pout with Phut, the third son of Ham; in illustration of which idea, he observes, that, as Phut was third in descent from Noah, so βουδύας, Budyas is named in Arrian, as a king in India, third in descent from Dionysus. It would seem that the scarf with its legend presented in Thibet, were an appeal to the patriarch Mani, accompanied by a solemn wish, that the person greeted may be admitted into the circle of renewed existence, in the same way as Mani had anciently been favoured,

in China, and I doubt not, reaches to the limits of Mantchieux Tartary. I view it merely in the light of an emblem of friendship, and a pledge of amity. *Ibid.*

I have been much gratified by the particular attention paid by Capt. Turner to this ceremony, and it were to be wished that every traveller would be equally accurate in relating even the most trifling customs of the distant nations he may visit. The meaning of the ceremony, I conceive, will be discovered upon what are termed Etruscan vases: as the umbrella, and its use in the East, may be understood by a reference to these monuments of art, and records of ancient religious opinions, so, I conceive, may the present of the scarf, with its mystic legend, in Thibet. It is no more than the girdle presented by the vivifying agent, who calls him that accepts it into the circle of life. On vases, it is marked with what denote the seeds of existence; in Thibet, it is impregnated with the mystic words *Oom maunee paimee oom*, which are supposed to be equally efficacious.

The entrance into the regenerated state is expressed on a vase in the collection of Passeri, by a seated female in the act of putting on the girdle. In the same work, we read of a mystical dance, termed *Saltatio ad restim*, where dancing youths, taking hold of the same rope, described in their movements a circle. When we hear of Ceres with her wheaten crown, we are reminded of that goddess, who, instituting the mysteries, taught the admission of decayed nature into the circle of existence, of which the grain in her chaplet emblematically represented the seeds; and when a Grecian female had passed the pains of labour, a chaplet was suspended at her portal, to signify that a human being was newly admitted into the circle of life.

By way of concluding these remarks upon dotted circles, I will notice a singular vase of very homely workmanship and painting, preserved in the British Museum, and published, Plate LVII. in the third Volume of D'Hancarville, which represents Cassandra slain by the Dioscuri. A female extends her arms ready to receive her after death, and another holds a taper, at the top of which, instead of flame, appears a circle of luminous spots. I do not hesitate to explain this emblem, as the circle of existence, into which the slaughtered Cassandra is about to be readmitted. To the left above, a female reaches out the branch of conversion; and to the right, at top, the owl brings a hoop illumined with mystic spots. Other circular dotted emblems disposed in the opaque parts of the scene, may imply future circles or stages of existence, in different planets. Mr. Böttiger has thought this painting worth notice in his Dissertation upon another vase, whereon the story of Cassandra is differently represented. I presume, the torch surmounted by a dotted circle, is what Mr. Böttiger has termed a key in the hand of the priestess, the warden of the temple. Nevertheless the engraving given by D'Hancarville is correct, and the symbol cannot be mistaken. Upon the other circular emblems Mr. B. is silent. But with regard to that vase, which has given occasion to the elaborate dissertation of Mr. Böttiger, I will observe by the way, the subject of it is of similar meaning with the other in the British Museum. The event succeeds to a very generally recorded destruction,—the overthrow of Troy.—The violence offered is not so much to Cassandra, as to inert, but repugnant nature; and I suspect, the *embryo* figure sketched upon the discus, in the upper part of the painting commended



Tendi del:

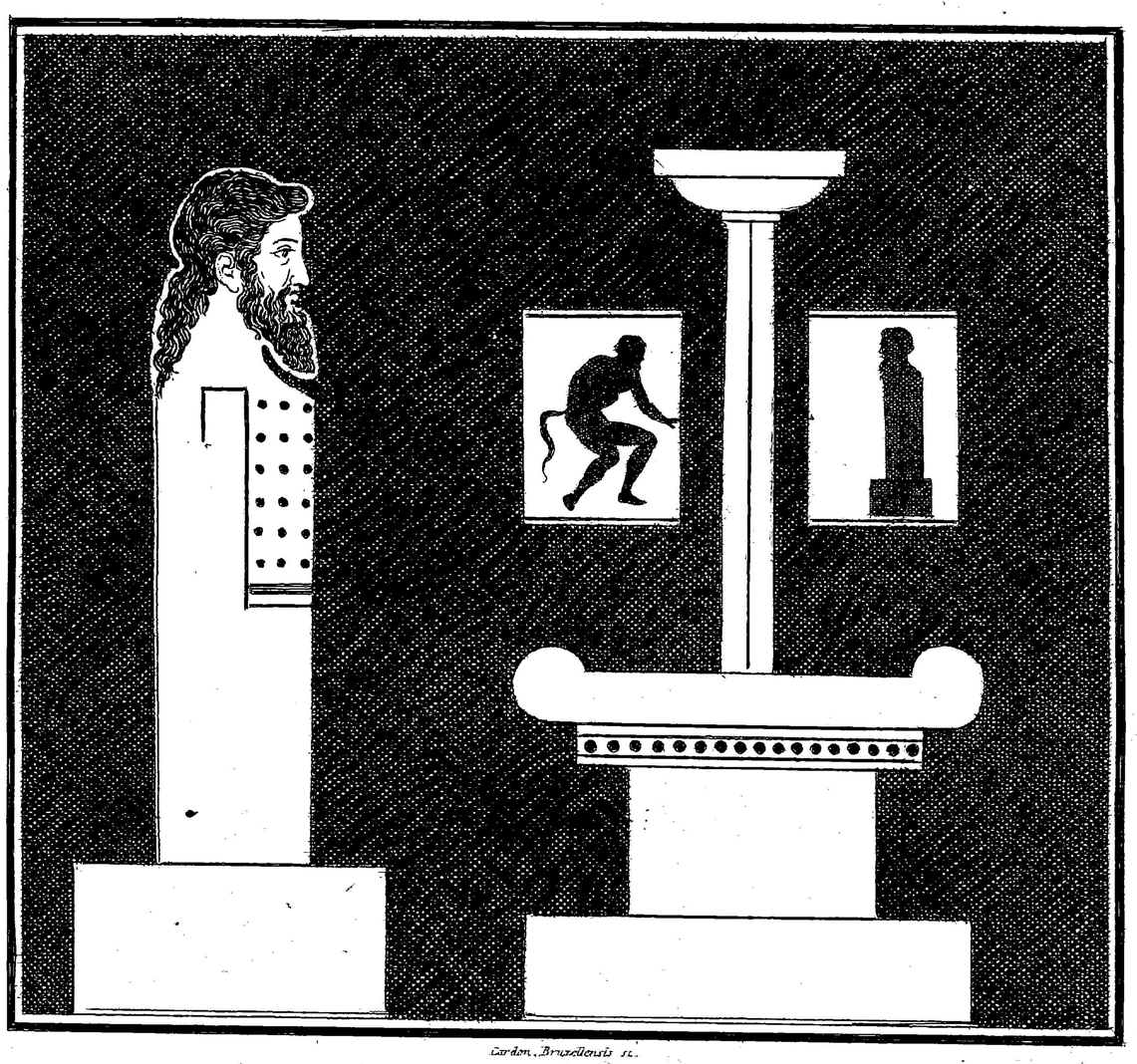
Ant: Cardon fc.

Apud Art. Champernowne Armig.

by Mr. Böttiger, is no *votive tablet*, unless, indeed, it be to Artemis Lochia.

While speaking of Trojan history, an unpublished vase of F. Champernowne, Esq. occurs to me, exhibiting the flight of Æneas under circumstances, that I apprehend no poet ever detailed, but aptly enough conceived, if we refer them to the initiators in Lower Italy.—Æneas, bearing Anchises on his back, is represented wading ancle deep through shoal water, and conducted by Mercury to a faun as the generative, or re-invigorating principle, but hooded, to denote his position *in inferis*. Anchises carries off a cornucopia, the symbol of fertility, instead of the Penates. Behind is a seated female, her head and arms gracefully turned, and designed with uncommon taste. From her retrospective attitude, and the affectionate concern expressed in her countenance, she may probably personate that *desiderium*, which the Trojan hero might be supposed to experience at quitting his ruined country. I would therefore designate her ΠΟΘΟΣ; but in this I may be mistaken. The fishes in the lower part of the painting are equally symbols of water and generation. It may be said, that the expedition of Æneas to the Inferi is no more than his voyage to Hesperia, an ancient name for Italy, which was occidental with respect to Greece. But I must add, that, like the painting disserted upon by Mr. Böttiger, the plate before us illustrates the destruction and subsequent renewal of things, and the work of Mr. Boulanger will shew, that subversion in the political as well as in the physical world was anciently considered the prelude as it were to a new life, and order and general happiness. In the same way would I dispose of all those subjects on vases, which antiquaries have lately termed Homeric.

These remarks I particularly recommend to the reader who may be acquainted with the dissertation of the learned Professor, and those who seek new subjects of mythology upon vases, will do well to consider the painting I first cited. The strange hieroglyphics with which it is accompanied justify a belief, that whenever subjects were selected from history or mythology to adorn these funeral vessels, they were merely designed as vehicles for theological opinions. Hence facts were distorted, or gave place to mystical conceits, devised by those priests by whom the Eleusinian shews were conducted.

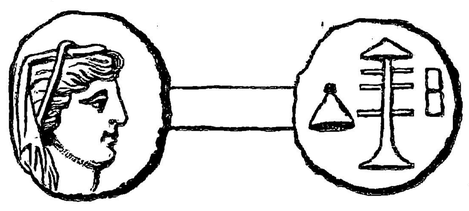


*Cardon, Bruxellensis sc.*

*In Museo Britannico.*

## *Of Solstitial Fountains.*

I NOW present my reader with a plate, which he may have noticed in the work of D'Hancarville.* The meaning of it has never been explained. The antiquary therefore, who looks with eagerness for inedited works, will probably be not less gratified, if I shall succeed in rendering intelligible a monument that is already familiar to him. The leading object in this scene is the terminal Bacchus; but other figures are comprised in it of allegorical import. To the right of a pillar with its capital, placed upon a font, a transparent opening again displays the terminal Bacchus in a fixed state, and in an opening to the left is a naked figure whose limbs are moved as if he were in the act of dancing. The pillar is here the boundary between motion and rest; and it seems to illustrate the inertness of Bacchus, and the temporary suspension of his powers. Thus much may be collected from the painting, which I leave for the present, to consider what is suggested to me respecting it by a coin of Thespiæ.



The reverse of this coin engraved in the work of Pelerin,† exhibits a lofty Phallus crossed by three horizontal lines, on one side of which is a bell, and on the other a *Theta*, in its

* Vol. II. Plate LXXII.

† Medailles des Peuples et des Villes, Vol. I. Plate XXV. fig. 26.

ancient square form ⊟, as the initial letter of Thespiæ in Bœotia, where it is supposed the coin was stricken.

Pausanias informs us,* that the figure of Ἔρως, or Love, at Thespiæ, was a white stone, i. e. a phallus, or obelisk ; so that if the leading emblem upon the coin had reference to his rites, we might conclude they were not of the most decent nature. But, upon perusing the tract ascribed to Lucian, *de Syriâ Deâ*, the whole was explained to me. The ancient Temple at Hierapolis,† in Syria, is there reported to have stood upon an eminence in the middle of the city, the base of which eminence was inclosed by a double wall. Near the gates to the north, were erected two Phalli, (of the enormous height of thirty fathoms‡), one of which a man ascended twice every year,§ swarming it by a chain, as was practised by the Arabs in climbing the palm trees of their country. Arrived at the top, he coiled his clothes round so as to form a nest or seat, and having let down another chain,‖ which he carried with him, and drawn up by the means of it food and necessaries ; he remained upon the Phallus seven days. Seated aloft, he prayed for all Syria ; but whilst he prayed, he ever and anon
H rang a bell, κροτέει ποίημα χάλκεον, τὸ ἀείδει μέγα, καὶ τρηχὺ, κινεόμενον.

* Bœotic. lib. ix. c. 27, p. 761. Ed. Kuhnii.

† Hodiernum ejus nomen Membig a primigenio *Mabog*, nam a Seleuco Syriæ rege dicta demum Hierapolis. *Rasche Rei Numariæ T. II. par. ii. p.* 279.

‡ I have substituted the judicious emendation of Palmerius, for the extravagant measure τριηκοσίων in the text.

§ Ἐς τουτέων τὸν ἕνα φαλλὸν, ἀνὴρ ἑκάστε ἔτεος δὶς ἀνέρχεται, or rather, perhaps, each of which he ascended once annually.

‖ I venture to read ἐ μακρὴν ταύτην, which words I suspect formerly crept into the text, although the first of the three is now omitted. I once indeed was almost tempted to offer violence to the word ἑτέρην by rendering the passage "*letting down one end of the chain*," because the identity expressed by ταύτην appeared to me at that time insurmountable ; but this could not by any means be admitted.

Some conceived that thus being nearer to the Gods he was heard to more advantage, whilst others referred the custom to the deluge, when all men betook themselves to the high places for safety. The Phallus, the sticks projecting from it to assist the man in ascending,* and the bell, all appear in the Thespian coin.† The Persian Mithra, who was supposed to intercede with Oromasdes, the deity, is represented floating in air upon the mystical Tau; the man therefore upon the Phallus, who interceded by prayer for all Syria, might have been designed to personate the Mithra; but says the Pseudo-Lucian, some refer this ceremony to the deluge; and by the lucubrations of the learned Mr. De Sacy, we are informed, that similar Phalli in Ægypt actually did refer to the overflowings of the Nile, which seem to have served as a national record of that greater flood, which was equally commemorated on the banks of the Euphrates.

By an inedited work of a Syriac writer, from whose Tour in Ægypt an extract has been given by Mr. De Sacy,‡ it appears that similar Phalli were erected before the Temple at Heliopolis in Ægypt. At the top of these obeliscal poles were bonnets of copper of many quintals weight: each pole was hollow, and being filled with water, when the river, with which it communicated at bottom, rose, the water issued from the bonnet, serving as a signal to the natives of the annual inundation.

We read in Bishop Pococke's account of the East,§ of a

* Or perhaps to mark the different heights to which the water rose.

† If indeed it be *really* a coin of Thespiæ.

‡ In the Magazin Encyclopédique.

§ Vol. II. p. 107.

pillar standing at Balbec, in the capital of which was a bason for water, from which a semicircular channel descended along the shaft; and of another pillar, of curious formation, nearer to Lebanon. Bp. Pococke doubted respecting the probable use of these, whether they had been designed for conduits, or for any superstitious ceremonies of the heathens.

Applying these observations to my immediate purpose, I discover from them the precise meaning of this painting, which Mr. Cardon, sen. who furnished both the drawings* and plates for the work of D'Hancarville, has re-engraved for me. It exhibits a solstitial fountain. The bowl-shaped capital and the thin tube in the shaft of the pillar, must be supposed to have connection with the Terminus near it. When the water contained in the pillar was increased by the commencement of solstitial floods, seeking its level, it would discharge itself through the perforated breast of the Bacchus. It is here that the illumined paintings in the back ground become intelligible: for, as previous to the arrival of the sun at the solstice, vegetation had slackened, so upon his passing it, vegetation was restored by these inundations. The contrasted figures of the Terminus and the dancing satyr imply this vicissitude of inertness and activity; and the cherishing effect of this phænomenon upon nature is expressed by the water issuing from the breast of Bacchus.

* These are preserved in the Townley library.

## *Of the Window and Ladder.—Singular Customs of the Oriental Buddhists explained.*

Of a few points yet remaining for discussion, the window and ladder may be noticed as interesting symbols. The former of these will probably admit of more than one explanation: in the following instance it seems connected with the idea of emanation, and the pervading power of the Deity. In a bas-relief in the possession of Charles Townley, Esq. certain figures at a banquet, reclining in a state of lassitude and satiety, are roused by the animating power, which suddenly pervading them, is by a whimsical allusion, represented in the figure of a horse, looking through the window. For the origin of this strange conceit I am at a loss to account, unless it have connection with that omen referred to by the Persian monarch, who rested his claim to the sovereignty upon the neighing of his horse at sunrise.* This bas-relief will serve to illustrate those representations of banquets upon vases, where figures in reclining attitudes are roused by various instruments of music.

Passeri explains the square windows on vases to be receptacles in the walls for images of the domestic Lares, which

* It may be pleasing to contrast these forced conceits of the ancients, with the pure nature of our poet Gray:

No more the *call* of incense breathing *morn*,
The swallow twittering from her straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion and the echoing horn
No more shall *rouse* them from their lowly *bed*.

were only opened on festive days, but were otherwise closed with bolts, as may be seen in the engravings of his work. But this opinion I must be permitted to class with the errors into which this learned antiquary was unavoidably betrayed, by placing the objects of his researches, amongst a people, who neither invented the vessels nor the allegories he described. From the engravings of his valuable work, however, I flatter myself the meaning of these symbols may be elucidated; for which purpose a plate* in his first Volume may be properly adduced, where a dove looks from one of these square receptacles, and a genius flying downward reaches out the vivifying scarf to a naked male figure. From this painting we discover, what powers were supposed to issue from these apertures, and what was the object of their descent.

If the reader be not fatigued with this continued jargon, which is actually necessary for the exposition of my subject, and which I have endeavoured to submit in as intelligible a manner as the nature of it will allow, I will proceed to investigate the meaning of another symbol, which I hope will better repay his attention than what I have lately discussed. I allude to the ladder: but here I am again obliged to dissent from Passeri, who for want of a better explanation was content to consider it an emblem of fortune. Quis fortunæ manentis imaginem apud Etruscos inveniri reputasset? et quidem nacti sumus, Vol. I. p. 7. But notwithstanding the authority of Ælian, which is ingeniously attached to this declaration of discovery, I venture to affirm that the antiquary was deceived in his conjecture. "Sustulit tamen hæsitationem (he continues) Ælianus de Var. Hist. II. 29, hæc scribens," *Πιτθακὸς*

* Vol. I. Plate LXXXVI.

ἐν Μιτυλήνῃ κατεσκεύασε τοῖς ἱεροῖς κλίμακα, εἰς οὐδεμίαν μὲν χρῆσιν ἐπιτήδειον, αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο ἀνάθημα εἶναι· αἰνιττόμενος τὴν ἐκ τῆς τύχης ἄνω, καὶ κάτω μετάπτωσιν. Τρόπον τινὰ τῶν μὲν εὐτυχούντων ἀνιόντων, κατιόντων δὲ τῶν δυστυχούντων. "Pittacus of Mitylene introduced a ladder into the temples of his country, not designing it for any particular use, but simply as a vote or offering. Implying thereby the rise and fall in the vicissitudes of fortune, according to which the prosperous might be said to climb upwards, the unfortunate to descend." All this may be very true of Pittacus; but as I speak of allegories which were not devised by the celebrated Lesbian sage, I must decline accepting this emblem in the sense assigned to it by Passeri. Nor will that country, to which hitherto I have usually betaken myself for the origin of symbols, and a solution of such difficulties as impeded my way, avail me in the present case; the meritorious historiographer of Hindustan directs me to Chaldæa for the genuine sense of this allegory, "to that grand theological school in which the metempsychosis was first divulged; in which the sidereal ladder and gates were first erected."* Mr. Maurice has left me no doubt as to the signification of the ladder, I therefore advance with confidence, that this symbol refers to the metempsychosis, of which the different stages are represented by its steps.† I am further inclined to suggest, that the window denotes perfection, or the highest stage of it. In the *Monumenti inediti* of Winckelmann, is inserted a grotesque

* Dissertation on the Oriental Trinities, p. 257.

† D'Hancarville was mistaken when he referred that gem of ancient rude sculpture, *Antiq. Etrusques, Vol. III. p* 195, *Plate XXVIII. Fig.* 19, to the potter Chorœbus, and the bee, which, as he supposed, denoted him to be of one of those Athenian tribes which occupied Mount Hymettus. It represents the Dioscurus with a vase in each hand, ascending the ladder of the metempsychosis, above the upper end of which is the Psyche, or butterfly.

illustration of the story of Jupiter and Alcmene. She is seated at a window, and Jupiter, conducted by Mercury, ascends by a ladder to the feigned character, who perhaps (might I be pardoned for an etymological transgression) was originally no more than *Ακμή-νη*, denoting the summit, or perfection.

Similar with the preceding is a vase,* where a grotesque figure, attended by an agent with the torch and situla, and the emblematical chaplet, ascends by a ladder to a female at a window, to whom he offers the Hesperian fruit and the mystic girdle. That the ladder is emblematical of life, we are assured by its being occasionally impregnated by the mysterious dots,† and as the steps denote the metempsychosis, it is fair to conclude that the window is the highest stage.

But what, if extending our view beyond the limits of Chaldæa, we enter the courts of the Birman and other Buddhistical kings, and witness ceremonies in every respect similar with the allegories depicted on Etruscan vases? We shall scarcely fear to incur the charge of rashness, or wanton misapplication of authorities, if we presume to reduce them to such principles, as those which the Chaldæan theologicians professed, who imparted their mystic emblems to Ægypt and to Greece. Whoever has perused the account of La Loubére of the kingdom of Siam, and the more recent narrative of our accomplished countryman respecting the court of Ava, he will remember that the kings of those countries appear at court only from a window ;‡ and that the hall of audience below,

* Passeri, Vol. III. Plate CCVI.

† Passeri, Vol. I. Plate XLVII.

‡ Dr. Kæmpfer was thus received by the governors of Osacca, and Miaco the residence of the ecclesiastical Emperor of Japan, appearing to him from an adjoining apartment, after the shutters of lattice-windows had been flung open, *p.* 479, and *p.* 483.

(for this opening is many feet from the ground) is decorated with umbrellas.* The eminence of the prince above his people is hereby implied, he thus appearing *perfect*, or in the highest stage of the metempsychosis, whilst his courtiers below are shaded by the umbrellas, as if *in inferis*, unpurified, or to suit my expression to the vase of Winckelmann, at the bottom of the ladder.

The palace of the king of Siam is covered with seven roofs:† the king resides under the *seventh*, nor dares any mortal climb or walk above his head.‡ What are these roofs but the ladder of the metempsychosis, with its seven steps, illustrated by Mr. Maurice,§ of which the king of Siam flatters himself he has ascended to the highest round? whilst, to shew the grovelling impurity, the gross and abject state of his courtiers, they are compelled to enter beneath the lowest roof, creeping upon all-fours.‖ In the same spirit the Rajah of Bootan is described¶ residing on the highest floor of his palace or dwelling, and the English ambassador and his suite were obliged to mount by ladders through differen t floors toarrive in his presence.— Other singularities which occur in the narrative of Capt. Turner may be referred to the influence of the same religious opinion,—such as: the houses at Buxadewar erected on props,

* See the Plate in the work of La Loubére, Vol. I. p. 418.

† A view of this is given by La Loubére in a Plate to Vol. I. p. 118.

‡ Thus, in the embassy of Col. Symes to Ava, may be noticed the offence given to boatmen, upon certain of our countrymen walking over their heads on the deck beneath which they slept, p. 451.

§ Ἑπλατόρε σύρων κατὰ βαθμίδος. Dissertation on the Oriental Trinities, p. 271. The course of lustration by the metempsychosis was supposed to be through the seven planets.

‖ La Loubére de Siam, Vol. I. p. 117.

¶ Turner's Embassy to Thibet, p. 66.

although in a hilly country, above the danger of reptiles or torrents, p. 28; Capt. Turner being conducted to the upper floor, upon his visit to a recluse, p. 103; and particularly in p. 91, in the citadel of Tassisudon, the seventh ladder leading to the temple of Mahamoonie.

I wish the coincidences I have brought into one point of view, might prove at least acceptable, if not of use, to those who have the opportunity of mixing with the different Asiatic nations, whose customs afford such various subject for admiration and curious enquiry. I offer them, at all events, as the profession of my thanks, for the infinite pleasure I have received from those, who to the benefit of their country, have already accomplished such visits, and who have communicated them with so much elegance to the improvement of their countrymen.

# CONCLUSION.

*Extinction of heathen Rites in Greece and Italy.—Eleusinian Mysteries inadequate to the end proposed in them.*

THESE are the chief observations I have made, after examining the paintings upon many vases, and comparing them with such allegories as I have found upon other works of ancient art. Excepting that examples have been retrenched, more there scarcely remained for me to say, for much respecting Etruscan vases is yet unintelligible; but to have exposed more of what I have discovered than has been submitted, would have only been to stir a filthy pool. The grossness of paganism we may be pardoned for omitting; the attaching ourselves to whatever, connected with it, may prove of service to universal history, is surely laudable and infinitely more pleasing. Many *arcana* of the pagan theology may never be ascertained; nevertheless, we have been permitted to recover as much from lost antiquity as may forward the useful, and even the polite and elegant arts; and provided the architect, who is obliged to borrow from Grecian mysteries the embellishments of his work, place not the lotus leaf above, and the pine-cone, or flame, beneath it, he may be excused from blame should he err in the application of more sophisticated symbols.

It seems as though a veil had been kindly drawn by providence for ages past over the disgusting errors of paganism, which having answered its purpose, may now perhaps be innocently removed, provided it be done with no irreverent

hand. The most polished states of Greece have been, perhaps, designedly possessed by an ignorant people, whose ferocity has rendered many parts inaccessible to the curious traveller, or whose jealousy has prevented his search. Not to mention the complete destruction of Roman grandeur by the northern nations, volcanos kindled by a Wise Hand have produced a moral, as well as a physical change in many parts of Italy, and burying whole tracts of country in oblivion with their monuments and rites, may perhaps have in some measure contributed to furnish smooth footway for Christianity to advance upon.

But, as no impropriety can now attend discussions of the present nature, if we consider the result of our discoveries, and the object to which the ænigmatical allusions of this mysterious theology seem to have been ultimately directed, it will appear, that a knowledge of the relative situation of man, with regard to the Deity, was attempted through an exposition of the œconomy of the universe, that renovation from water first brought to knowledge by ancient tradition, and afterwards traced through various phænomena, was considered as a pledge of re-existence and a future state; but the continual succession of decay and renovation observable in nature was blended with these speculations.—How often these revolutions were to be repeated, at what time they were to cease, were a point not easily to be determined. That they were supposed to be continued after the nature of the Indian metempsychosis we are instructed by a Roman poet, if a poet may be admitted as authority in such a case; and the discovery of the ladder upon Etruscan vases might lead us to compare the number of intermediate states of purification and trial, with the different stages

in the Indian system. But further, what shall we conclude respecting the eventual state?—If we pay attention to Plutarch, who exposes the secret object of the Isiac mysteries from which those of Eleusis appear to have been derived, we shall learn, that the highest stage in the scale of nature was as the garment of Osiris—*φωτοειδὴς*—"shining as the light,"—that "the perception of that which was intelligent, pure, and holy, flashed like lightning on the soul, which was grasped at and viewed but for a moment, and then it passed away."—When philosophy was employed upon such speculations it was termed *epoptic*, as some might infer, because it was then versed on such doctrines as were explained *epoptically*, or *by shews*, at Eleusis. And this was to be effected by the exercise and improvement of the mind, by abstracting it from all considerations of sense. Plutarch further explains, that the Deity was removed far from earth, not liable to corruption or decay: that the eventual state was a participation of the Divine Nature, termed by him *μετουσία τοῦ Θεοῦ*, of which the soul, whilst encompassed about with body and passions, had only an obscure glimmering, but when freed from these impediments, and removed into the purer regions, it was then that God was to become its leader and king; upon Him would it then wholly depend, still beholding without satiety, and still longing after that beauty, which it was not possible for man to express.

These indeed are noble sentiments, but whether the doctrine of the Hierophants reached so far, there may be some reason to doubt. It must at least be confessed, that buffoonery the most stupid and absurd,* frivolous conceits, and gross indecency,

* See the collections of Passeri, D'Hancarville, and Tischbein *passim*.

curiously sophisticated, were very inadequate to so sublime an end. To this it might likewise be added, if such were the doctrines of Eleusis, by what high degree of novelty and merit were the schools of Greek philosophy recommended?—and wherefore did the government forbear to punish the professors in them, who lectured upon subjects which we are given to understand were only to be learnt within the college of Eleusis?

These questions can only be imperfectly answered.—Warburton conceived that the doctrine of Eleusis differed from the doctrine of the schools: Villoison has contended they were the same; but in explaining the former, he has done no more than adduce the opinions of the Stoïcs, (and the modern Spinosa,) which exclude a belief in future rewards and punishments,* and according to which the metempsychosis must also be rejected.—Plutarch, cited above, has evidently Platonised: he has, perhaps, exceeded the mark† by as much as Villoison may be supposed to have fallen short of it. Without insisting upon the reports of Plato, Pausanias and Clement, that the mysteries were instituted by way of purification, and passing by those frequent allusions to purification which are evident upon the Greek vases, it were better to enquire,—what did the mysteries decree with regard to those who omitted to avail themselves of the benefit of initiation?—and wherein did any *preference* consist?—A fragment of Cicero,‡ respecting the

* The doctrine of eternal punishments was asserted by the Mystagogues, if we may give credit to Celsus. See Warburton, Vol. I. p. 139. But it may even be doubted, whether this writer were sincere.

† I object to Mr. Taylor's attempt to explain the mysteries solely by the Platonic philosophy, for the same reason.

‡ "Ut interdum veteres illi, sive vates, (Orpheus) sive in sacris initiisque tradendis

metempsychosis must be allowed to have considerable weight: it seems to imply, that the uninitiated entered into another state of existence after the present, by way of obtaining that lustration which the mysteries would have at once secured to them.—There is every reason to believe, that the paintings upon Greek vases are the only volumes in which Eleusinian doctrines respecting a future state are correctly detailed. Much may be brought to light by their means. It remains that we consider, whether our time will be worthily bestowed in prosecuting the enquiry.

divinæ mentis interpretes, qui nos ob aliqua scelera suscepta in vitâ superiore, pœnarum luendarum causâ natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur:"—given by the Baron de Ste. Croix, p. 348.

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BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek
MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Christie, James

A disquisition upon Etruscan Vases displaying their probable connection with the shows et Eleusis, and the Chinese feast of Lanterns, with explanations of a few of the principal allegories depicted upon them

London 1806

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